IRAQ'S UGLY BARBARISM, AMERICA'S GRIM DUTY

SEPTEMBER 10 & 17, 1990 · $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

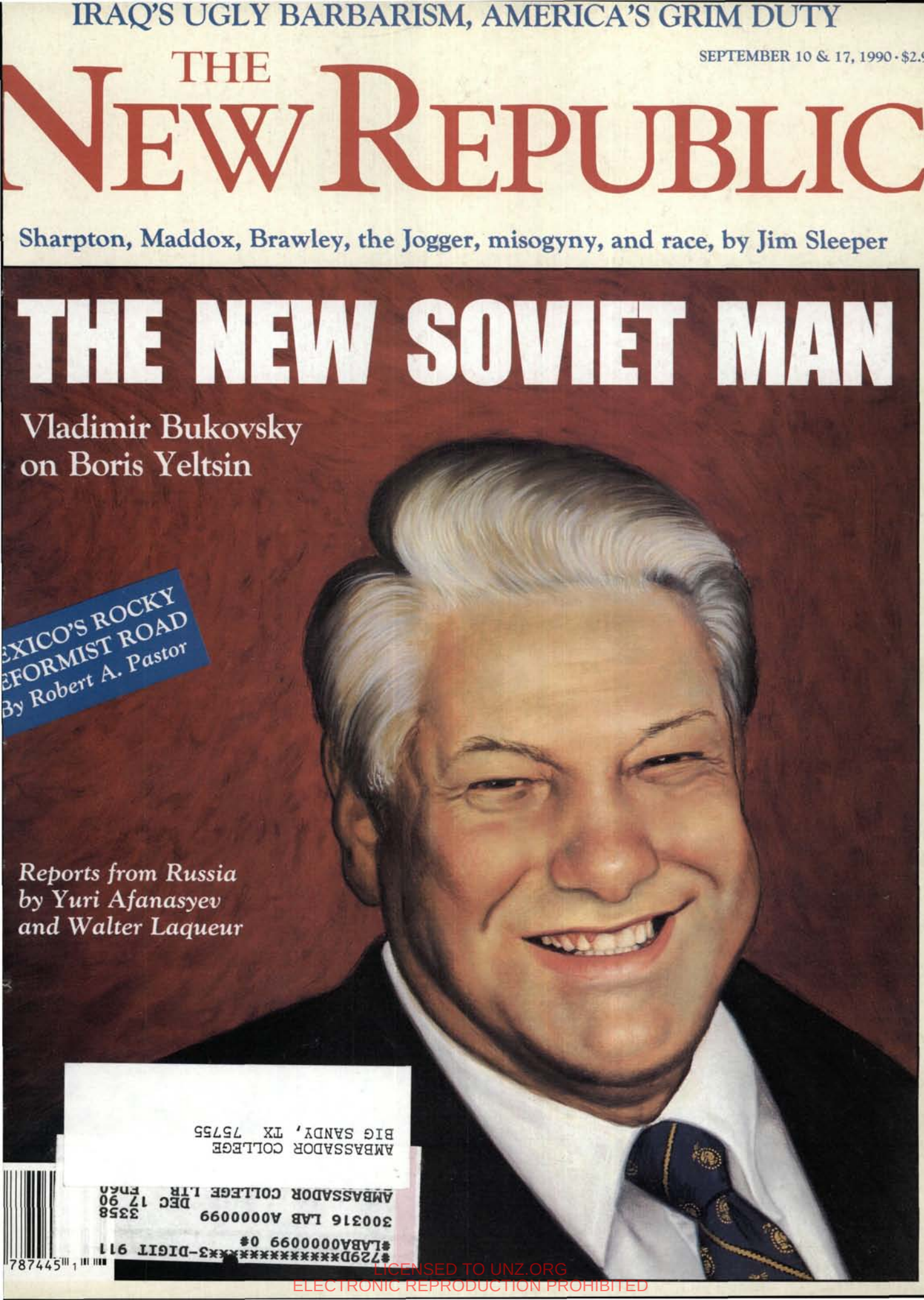
Sharpton, Maddox, Brawley, the Jogger, misogyny, and race, by Jim Sleeper

THE NEW SOVIET MAN

Vladimir Bukovsky on Boris Yeltsin

EXICO'S ROCKY EFORMIST ROAD By Robert A. Pastor

Reports from Russia by Yuri Afanasyev and Walter Laqueur



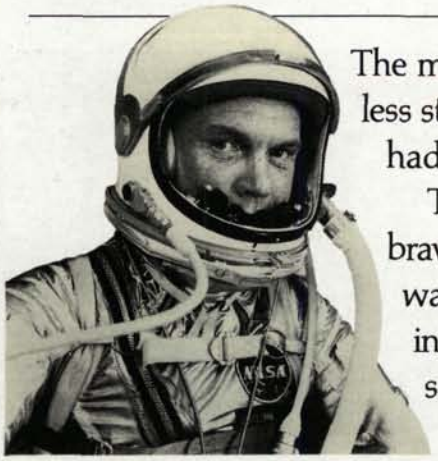
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIG SANDY, TX 75755

787445

#729D**********3-DIGIT 911
#LAB A0000099 0#
300316 LAB A0000099
3358
DEC 17 90
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIB

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEY SAY IT'S GOING TO FLY. OF COURSE, THEY AREN'T GOING.



On February 20, 1962, the Atlas of Friendship 7 boosted the first American, John Glenn, into Earth orbit. His historic flight was the 117th for an Atlas.

The machine had stainless steel skin. The men had steel nerves.

The men were the brave Americans who waited, strapped into a cramped capsule atop 125 tons of explosive fuel, to be blasted into orbit.

The machine was originally America's first intercontinental ballistic missile, developed by General Dynamics in the early 1950s, and for nearly 10 years the free world's major deterrent weapon.

The men were the Mercury astronauts.

The machine was our Atlas rocket.

Their histories merged in the early 1960s, when General Dynamics began reconfiguring Atlas to launch payloads into space for the Air Force and NASA.

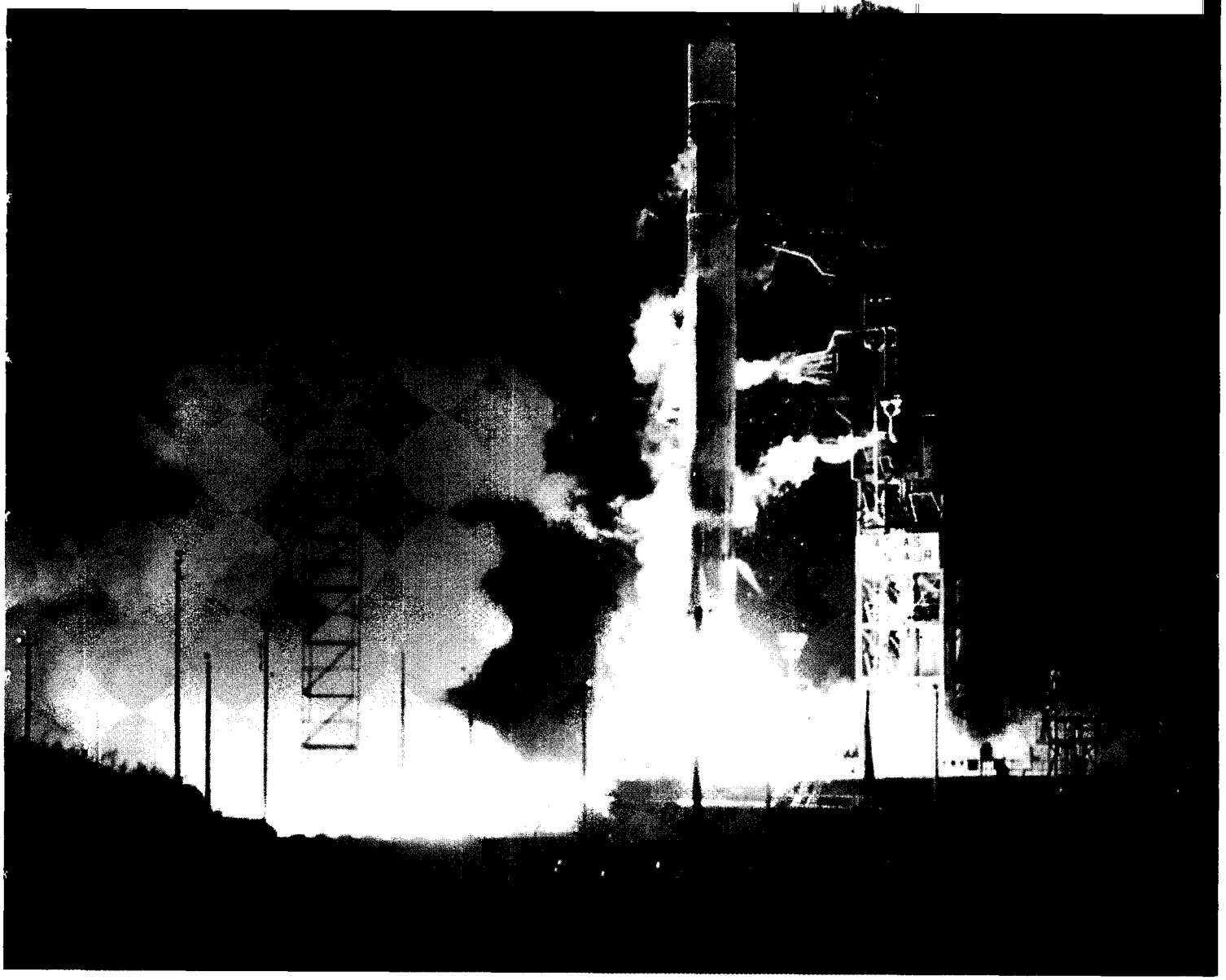
Since then, the stainless steel sheen of the Atlas skin is the only thing that has remained unchanged, as literally thousands of technological improvements have been incorporated.

This fiendish-looking device was part of the apparatus we built to simulate effects of weightlessness. In addition to training equipment, General Dynamics also built tracking stations around the globe.

Atlas has boosted virtually every U.S. weather satellite. In December 1958, it boosted the world's first communications satellite, Project Score, which circled the globe broadcasting President Eisenhower's Christmas message. Atlas went on to launch 36 more communications satellites, and dozens of scientific probes, including Pioneer, Mariner, and Surveyor, the first American spacecraft to soft-land on the moon.

With a record of 496 launches, our Atlas is one of America's most successful and reliable launch systems.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Inside the stainless steel skin of a Centaur upper stage, one of our craftsmen measures expansion and contraction stress. Unique technology makes the Atlas/Centaur the most efficient launch vehicle in use today.

Our 30-plus years of experience and the dedication to excellence of the Atlas team are especially important now.

In one of the largest commercial space ventures in history, General Dynamics has committed to the production of 62 new Atlas vehicles for government and business missions.

For over three decades, Atlas has made history in space.

And paid dividends here on Earth.

GENERAL DYNAMICS

A Strong Company For A Strong Country

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Asia Series

You can do business in Japan without shelling out a fortune.

For many companies, the biggest barrier to new markets has been the cost of business trips. Restaurants can be expensive, and even the smallest accommodations may carry oversized bills. Yet those willing to be a little adventurous will find that traveling comfortably in Japan doesn't require packing a suitcase full of yen.

Hop on the bus.

A $20 bus ride from Narita Airport may not strike you as a bargain, but compared to a $150 taxi, it is. The buses marked "Airport Limousine" stop at all the major hotels in Tokyo.

Sleep cheap.

Business hotels are a fairly new phenomenon. Catering primarily to Japanese businessmen, they're clean, functional, and conveniently located. Although vending machines replace amenities like room service, at $40 to $50 a night these hotels are a sound investment. Two major chains are the Tokyu Inn (tel. 03/406-0109) and the Washington (tel. 03/434-5211).

Food for naught.

It should come as no surprise that you'll save money eating where the locals eat. Good and reasonably priced restaurants can be found in department stores and the basements of office buildings. At lunch, ask for *teishoku*. It means special of the day, and includes rice, miso soup, salad, meat or fish, and dessert—all for around five dollars. *Ramenya* and *sobaya* (noodle shops) are perfect places for a quick and tasty meal.

Northwest notes.

Since your time is money too, we make it as quick and easy as possible for you to get to Japan, by offering daily nonstops from the most U.S. cities. So you can count on arriving when you want, rested and ready to do business. And we give you something else no other U.S. airline can: the knowledge, understanding and insight that comes from over 40 years of helping people do business in Asia. For international reservations, call your travel agent or Northwest at 1-800-447-4747. To find out more about doing business in Asia, call 1-800-553-2215, ext. 183.

© 1990 Northwest Airlines, Inc.

NORTHWEST AIRLINES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
AUG 30 1990

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

SEPTEMBER 10 & 17, 1990

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUES 3,947 & 3,948

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
HENDRIK HERTZBERG
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL, ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, MORTON KONDRACKE, ROBERT WRIGHT
Editor, New Republic Books (Basic Books)
BILL NEWLIN
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry
RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Architecture
HERBERT MUSCHAMP
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, STANLEY CROUCH, JAMES K. GLASSMAN, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ADAM MICHNIK, ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER, MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL, RICHARD L. STROUT, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER, NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN, MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Associate Editor
JACOB WEISBERG
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Assistant Editors
KAREN LEHRMAN, LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Assistant Production Manager
KRISTIN CONRADI
Production Associate
ERIC V. PETERSON
Literary Assistant
AIMS McGUINNESS
Reporter-Researchers
WESTON KOSOVA, JEFF ROSEN, JOSHUA ZIMMERMAN

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Associate Publisher
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Director
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Advertising Assistant
CECELIA M. STEPHENS
Accounting Assistant
CHRISTINE SCHAUT
Circulation Assistant
PATTI NAJDA
Back Issues and Reception
CAROLYN PARHAM
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

Cover by Bryan Leister for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 37.

6 CORRESPONDENCE Madonna's meaning, Brennan's legacy, Mandela's men, &c.

8 MICHAEL KINSLEY **TRB: STROUT'S LAW** The man who made this column.

9 THE EDITORS **FIGHTING DIRTY** Saddam Hussein's barbaric use of hostages is a reminder of why containment of the Iraqi regime will not be enough. **BROKEN CLOCK** The War Powers Resolution is in need of repair. **NOTEBOOK** Richard L. Strout, &c.

14 WALTER LAQUEUR **CAUCASIAN POSTCARD: RETURN TO PYATIGORSK** Gorbachev's home region has changed much in thirty years, but things still don't work very well.

17 YURI AFANASYEV **LOST IN A FOG** The vague pronouncements of the 28th Soviet Party Congress are not accidental. They're what perestroika is all about.

20 JIM SLEEPER **NEW YORK STORIES** The common themes of the chilling racial courtroom dramas that have shaken New York, from Howard Beach to the case of the Central Park jogger, are the political uses of victim status—and misogyny.

24 JACOB WEISBERG **COMPUTER TROUBLE** How much did Ed Meese have to do with the Justice Department's persecution of a software firm called INSLAW?

27 ROBERT A. PASTOR **SALINAS TAKES A GAMBLE** Reversing the Gorbachev strategy, Mexico's President Salinas has put economic reform ahead of political liberalization. The question is whether the reforms will work and democracy will wait.

34 STANLEY KAUFFMANN **ON FILMS: MYSTERIES** *The Two Jakes* doesn't begin to live up to *Chinatown*. *Presumed Innocent* labors along.

35 ROBERT BRUSTEIN **ON THEATER: LIGHTEN UP, AMERICA** Censorious puritanism spreads among moralists and liberals alike.

37 VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY **BORN AGAIN AND AGAIN** *Against the Grain* by Boris Yeltsin; *Parting with Illusions* by Vladimir Pozner

44 ARTHUR C. DANTO **THE HYPER-INTELLECTUAL** *Selected Writings* and *America* by Jean Baudrillard; *Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond* by Douglas Kellner

46 DAVID BAKER **POEM** *Contract*

48 RICHARD JENKYNS **LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING** *The Oxford Book of Humorous Prose* edited by Frank Muir

54 MICKEY KAUS **WASHINGTON DIARIST: UNDERSTATEMENTS** What did I do in the war again?

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 203, Numbers 11 & 12, Issues 3,947 & 3,948, September 10 & 17, 1990. (Printed in the U.S. on August 22, 1990.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 8 & 15, July 9 & 16, July 30 & Aug. 6, Aug. 20 & 27, and Sept. 10 & 17, 1990) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $59.97; foreign, $89.97; Canada, $74.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1990 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Virgin mirth

To the editors:

Luc Sante tries to accuse Madonna of doing something important, and missing the mark ("Unlike a Virgin," August 20 & 27). But what Madonna has really done is to make pop music fun again, with enough sex, lies, and hair color to appeal to adults. She also deserves a great deal of credit for resisting the temptation to compromise her talents by including allegedly significant political and social commentary—including bowing to the convention that to be sexy and female one must be vulnerable.

ALLISON HAYWARD
Sacramento, California

To the editors:

Is Luc Sante kidding about Madonna? The whole of "Unlike a Virgin" could have been boiled down to one simple sentence: Madonna is merely a public entertainer who has understood her time. So what? I mean, did Luc Sante get turned down for a date, or what? Why waste all that energy and brilliance trashing a woman who not only represents the glorious epitome of crass American commercialism, but who also is the only modern heir of the Elvis Presley-James Dean-Neal Cassady tradition of subverting the current generation? Or is TNR trying to cash in on the phenomenon? To provoke such drastic hysterics, she must represent something real to someone.

T. IMHOOF
Manassas, Virginia

Judicial review

To the editors:

In evaluating "What Brennan Wrought" (August 13), you criticized the former justice's propensity for result-oriented judicial activism. Although I agree that Brennan might have been a bit too eager to substitute his gut feelings of justice for judgments struck by legislatures, I disagree with your assertion that "Brennan also overreached in affirmative action." Although you might believe that much affirmative action is "egregious," Brennan's desire to *uphold* such programs hardly reflects judicial activism. At worst, Brennan here was guilty of excessive deference to legislatures. At best, he showed the sort of healthy respect for legislative choices that you suggest he should have shown in other contexts.

Furthermore, during the past decade's struggle over affirmative action, conservative justices have been the judicial activists. They have invalidated programs in which, according to their own guts, "innocent whites" are "unfairly" affected. Their views of "fairness" are no more rooted in constitutional text or history than were Brennan's judgments about the death penalty, abortion, or welfare rights. It is revealingly ironic that when the Court was asked to strike down standardized examinations on the grounds that blacks were "unfairly" disqualified, conservative justices held that "fairness" in terms of past racial discrimination is a question not for courts, but for legislatures.

Given the hodgepodge of judicial restraint and activism both on the Court and in your own editorial, those who claim that judges should "interpret, not make, the law" bear the burden of proving that their jurisprudence is not just as result-oriented as was Brennan's.

DAVID CHANG
New York, New York

Out of Africa

To the editors:

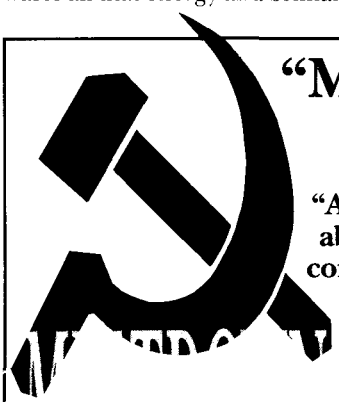
Jacob Weisberg's article "Mandela's Men" (July 9 & 16) contains several mischaracterizations of my views on U.S. policy toward South Africa. First, he suggests that I have been "unwilling to recognize that the tide has turned against white minority rule." To the contrary, as I stated during a visit to South Africa in early March, I am "very encouraged that a real process of change has begun which holds enormous possibilities for negotiating a peaceful transition to a genuine non-racial democracy."

Second, Weisberg argues that I have "greeted the collapse of successive pillars of apartheid with yawns and shrugs." Yet not one of the "pillars of apartheid"—the Population Registration Act, the Land Act, the Group Areas Act, the "Homeland" laws, and the Internal Security Act—has collapsed as yet.

Thus when I say "nothing fundamental has changed," I am accurately describing the continuing *fundamental* political and legal realities. The lesser apartheid measures that President de Klerk has undertaken to reform do not alter the essentials of the system of white domination. Nonetheless, I do acknowledge the specific reforms de Klerk has initiated, and I welcome them as steps in the right direction. I have not described them as more cosmetic than real—as asserted in the article—but they clearly fail to constitute fundamental change.

Weisberg also distorts my position on

continued on page 52



"MYTH DISPELLING!"
–Robert Conquest
author, *The Great Terror*

"An indispensable guide to today's news about the Soviet Union and every other communist economy."
–Aaron Wildavsky
University of California

MELTDOWN
MELTDOWN
MELTDOWN
Inside the Soviet Economy
by **Paul Craig Roberts** and **Karen LaFollette**

Most Western analysts of Mikhail Gorbachev's reform plans in the Soviet Union focus on democracy and glasnost. What is still only dimly understood is the desperate economic situation. In *Meltdown: Inside the Soviet Economy*, economists Paul Craig Roberts and Karen LaFollette examine the Soviet economic crisis as it affects consumers, managers, and senior officials. They offer a rigorous yet nontechnical and highly readable analysis of the Soviet economy. It will be indispensable for all who wish to make sense of the current strife in the Soviet Union. 152 pages/ $19.95 cloth/ $9.95 paper

224 Second Street S.E., Dept. NR
Washington, D.C. 20003
(202)546-0200 Fax (202)546-0728

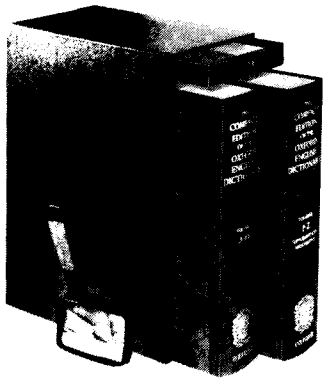
CATO INSTITUTE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PERMANENT PLEASURES

Choose one of these fine works and save up to $290.

You simply agree to buy 4 books within the next 2 years.



The Compact Edition of The Oxford English Dictionary

for **$32.95** (Pub. price $250)

"The most complete, most scholarly dictionary of the English language"—*The Christian Science Monitor.* Through photoreduction, the original 13-volume set has been reproduced in this two-volume *Compact Edition.* A Bausch & Lomb magnifying glass is included.

Joseph Campbell's Historical Atlas of World Mythology

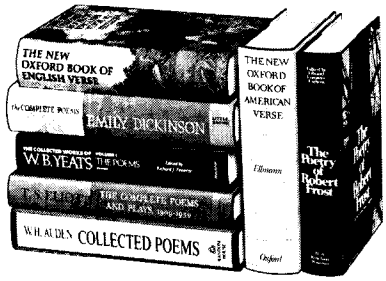
for **$29.95** (Pub. prices total $250)

This masterwork—the culmination of Campbell's brilliant career—traces the saga of humankind's spiritual awakening. In five lavishly illustrated volumes, Campbell shows how our ancestors lived and what they believed, shedding new light on who we are and where we come from. Insightful, illuminating, challenging, the *Historical Atlas of World Mythology* is a vibrant introduction to the past—and to the mind of one of this century's greatest thinkers. 99 4-color maps; 1,152 photographs and drawings.

The Times Atlas of the World Seventh Comprehensive Edition

for **$29.95** (Pub. price $149.95)

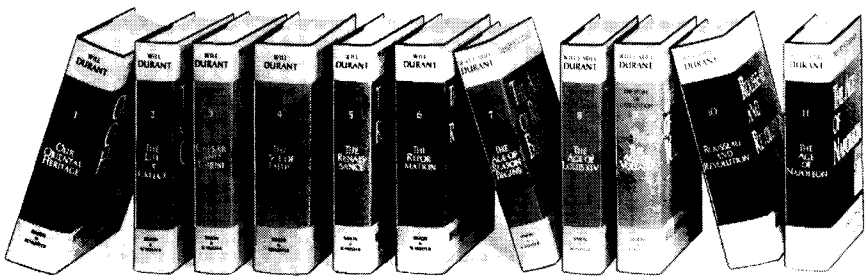
"The best atlas available in English"—*The New York Times.* The only atlas printed in 8 colors for clear reading of geographic and political features. This volume contains 292 pages of color maps and a 277-page index with over 200,000 entries.


THE NEW OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE
EMILY DICKINSON
W.B. YEATS
THE NEW OXFORD BOOK OF AMERICAN VERSE
The Poetry of Robert Frost
W.H. AUDEN COLLECTED POEMS

Library of Great Poetry

for **$27.95** (Pub. prices total $193.40)

Some of the finest poetry ever written: evocative, eloquent, bitter, beautiful and wholly accessible to the modern reader. Here is a superb 7-volume set, featuring the collected works of W.B. Yeats, Emily Dickinson, T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost and W.H. Auden, plus two splendid anthologies: *The New Oxford Book of English Verse* and *The New Oxford Book of American Verse.*



The Story of Civilization by Will and Ariel Durant

for **$29.95** (Pub. prices total $335.45)

For almost half a century Will and Ariel Durant traced the continuity of world history—the religions and philosophies, the political and economic tides, the arts and sciences, the customs and conquests—to show the foundations of society today. A Book-of-the-Month Club exclusive for almost 50 years, the Durants' illustrated masterwork is history come alive.

© 1990 BOMC

Facts About Membership. As a member you will receive the *Book-of-the-Month Club News*® 15 times a year (about every 3½ weeks). Every issue reviews a Selection and more than 150 other books, which are carefully chosen by our editors. If you want the Selection, do nothing. It will be shipped to you automatically. If you want one or more other books—or no book at all—indicate your decision on the Reply Form and return it by the specified date. *Return Privilege:* If the *News* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit. *Cancellations:* Membership may be discontinued, either by you or by the Club, at any time after you have bought 4 additional books. Join today. With savings and choices like these, Book-of-the-Month Club is where book lovers belong.

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB®

Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc., P.O. Box 8803, Camp Hill, PA 17011-8803 **A127-9-1**

Check one box only.

- ☐ **913.** The Story of Civ. **$29.95**
- ☐ **905.** Compact OED **$32.95**
- ☐ **946.** Times Atlas of the World **$29.95**
- ☐ **934.** Hist. Atlas of Mythology **$29.95**
- ☐ **954.** Library of Poetry **$27.95**

Please enroll me as a member of Book-of-the-Month Club and send me the item I have checked at left, billing me for the appropriate amount, plus shipping and handling charges. I agree to buy four more books during the next two years. A shipping and handling charge is added to each shipment.

Name_____ **0-64**
(Please print plainly)

Address_____ Apt._____

City_____

State_____ Zip_____

Prices shown are U.S. prices. Outside the U.S. prices are generally higher.
All orders subject to approval.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®
FROM WASHINGTON

Strout's law

Richard L. Strout, who died August 19 at age ninety-two, wrote this column for forty years, 1943 to 1983. By the end of that time, he had developed an undeserved reputation for a sort of harmless, twinkly-eyed, grandfatherly saintliness. That is the fate of anyone who lasts long enough in journalism, and few lasted longer than Dick Strout, who started in Washington covering the Harding administration and lived to rue Ronald Reagan.

To tell the truth, he did succumb just a bit to the temptation to be cuddly, and the pleasures of being an exhibit in the Museum of Lost Liberalism. Who wouldn't? What could be nicer than having Bill Moyers doe-eyed and respectful at your feet, lapping up your stories of FDR? And Dick Strout fit the part so well: tall and Lincolnesque in bearing, yet with a full white mustache and eyebrows for that nice, fuzzy mellowing effect.

Let me stop right here and concede that not least among the assets this column lost when Strout retired was the gift of physical description. He was especially good on hair, or the lack thereof. Hubert Humphrey: "His black hair drawn like a wig over his bald, bulging forehead makes him look like an actor playing 'The Mikado.'" Willy Brandt's "scalp lock is still a peninsula but it is in more danger of encirclement than West Berlin." Everett Dirksen's "famous locks . . . have been compared to the tangled kelp in the Sargasso Sea." John F. Kennedy (1959): "A man who might be president if he had a bald spot." Oh well.

Anyway, I prefer to remember a crustier Dick Strout. When I took over this column from him seven years ago, I asked whether he had any words of wisdom for me. The question was balanced on the knife-edge between seriousness and jest, capable of tipping either way depending on the response. He eyed me solemnly and pronounced: "Always follow Strout's Law."

Strout's Law? I steeled myself for something like, "Never betray liberalism." Or perhaps, "Accuracy above all." In full serious mode, I asked, "What is Strout's Law, Mr. Strout?"

He said, "Strout's law: sell every piece three times." He then explained how he would write an article for *The Christian Science Monitor*, where he worked from 1921 through the mid-1980s, rework it as a TRB column, and then try to peddle it as a feature somewhere else. An inspiration to our profession.

The truth is I didn't know Dick Strout very well, although it was my job to edit his column for several years before I took it over. His relations with TNR were cordial but somewhat distant. I suspect in later years he valued his deniability as the magazine slid away from the axioms of conventional liberalism. He generally slipped his manuscript under the front door of our office building sometime late Tuesday evening, and I would pick it up on my way in Wednesday morning.

He did usually show up for our occasional office lunches with Washington big shots (just as he was a regular at the *Monitor*'s famous breakfasts). There was one lunch where Henry Kissinger and some lesser foreign-policy guru were exchanging abstrusemanship in thick Germanic accents as the rest of us desultorily picked at our food. Suddenly Dick Strout, age eighty or so, leaned across me to the young intern seated on the other side and stage-whispered, "You know, you're a very pretty girl." I suppose, in the world Dick Strout helped to create, that could lead to a lawsuit these days.

Very rarely, Strout would pop into the office unexpected, usually in the summer and generally on some fabricated mission. His real goal was a bit of a sit-down and some air conditioning on his way from the *Monitor*'s office on Sixteenth Street near the White House to his bus stop on Massachusetts Avenue beyond Dupont Circle. (Fair enough for a man in his ninth decade.) One afternoon he knocked on my office door and said, "Mind if I come in, young fella?" That was his usual form of address. I was never certain whether he knew my name. He sat down, caught his breath, then said, "Well tell me, young fella, how's your book coming along?"

"Gosh, Dick, I'm not writing a book."

"Oh really? Well, you know, anytime I need something to say to a young journalist, I always say, 'How's your book coming along?' This is the first time I've ever been caught out."

Strout was admirably free of the journalist's vain longing for hard covers. His only two books were a short memoir of the Model T, co-authored with E. B. White, and a collection of his columns published in 1979. His dominating obsession was on display in his very first column, March 8, 1943, where he warned of the dangers of a "midterm deadlock" after the next election. He meant a situation where the president's party would not control Congress. In the years since, that seems to have become our permanent condition, and Strout never tired of proclaiming the superiority of a parliamentary system of government, immune to that sort of paralysis.

That certainly would have been his sermon this summer, observing the budget fiasco. In these days of Republican presidents, it is tempting for a liberal to think that governmental paralysis is no bad thing. But Strout preached the New Deal lesson that strong government requires a president who can act decisively—and (the corollary) can be held responsible for the government's actions or lack thereof.

Strout's No. 2 obsession was gun control. "Americans love to grovel," he wrote after Bobby Kennedy was shot. "Think of all the fat little editorial writers sitting down at their typewriters and putting themselves in a properly melancholy mood and then dashing off an inspired article on 'the shame of America,'" rather than urging the one obvious practical step that might have prevented that shame.

This column continues to share those two obsessions, if not with the same passion or eloquence. A third obsession of Strout's later years, which this column no longer promotes, was the perils of immigration. Strout firmly believed that America's freedoms were nurtured and could only survive in a culture of shared language, middle-class prosperity, and European values. He worried that a flood of foreign poor would distract from America's special burden of conscience, native blacks. And he believed an increased population threatened the environment. These are all worthy concerns. But the current TRB prefers a liberal vision that predates even Richard Strout, of an America refreshed and strengthened by waves of immigrants, for whom we've always found room.

Strout's TRB column adopted an autumnal air early on. In 1946: "This morose reporter . . . started out a gay and carefree lad twenty years ago but . . . covering . . . the Senate since then has dried his inner juices of geniality like the blight of those unfortunate Manhattan trees that are bathed continually in another kind of exhaust miasma." He was comparing Roosevelt to Coolidge long before he got around to comparing Kennedy to Roosevelt or Carter to Kennedy. The comparisons got less flattering as the decades passed. But for all his disappointments over the nation's failure—and sometimes this magazine's failure—to do as he advised, the juices of geniality kept on flowing until the end.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

SEPTEMBER 10 & 17, 1990

FIGHTING DIRTY

The brutal use of innocent human beings for sordid political ends, now mercifully rare in the West and becoming so in the East, is still so common in the Third World that it is hard not to feel numb in the face of it. But the latest barbarities committed by the dictator of Iraq have riveted the attention, and excited the anger, of what may now be called, less ironically than at any time in recent memory, the world community. Saddam Hussein is adding an ugly new chapter to the sorry history of Middle Eastern hostage-mongering. When Iran's revolutionary theocracy held American diplomats for ransom a decade ago, the pretense was maintained that the actual hostage-holders were groups more or less independent of the government. (Khomeini, for all his cruel tyranny, was enough the product of an elegant civilization that he tried, faintly and hypocritically, to avoid the onus of common criminality.) Similar pretenses have been maintained with respect to Westerners seized and held in Lebanon. Hussein's kidnappings are different both in degree and in kind. Instead of dozens of hostages, he has taken thousands. And he has eliminated the middleman.

It's a mark of the civilization's advance that the world has declared it illegal—a "war crime"—for a country to take civilian hostages, to mistreat "internees" (those whose release might harm a country at war), and to place civilians in danger of military attack. The Fourth Geneva Convention, the law on this subject, was drafted in 1949, in response to atrocities in World War II for which German officers had been convicted of "crimes against humanity" at Nuremberg. It was common practice for the Nazis, especially the SS, to place French civilians aboard troop trains to forestall attacks by the Resistance, to drive captured civilians ahead of troops into battle on the eastern front, and to execute hostages in reprisal for attacks on German troops in occupied areas. Thus, Hussein is daily creating new parallels between himself and Hitler, compounding a record that already includes rule by torture and terror, the launching of aggressive war, and the use of poison gas against civilians as well as soldiers.

We wish President Bush were able to summon Churchillian (or even Reaganesque) eloquence to rally the people of the world against Saddam Hussein. The best Bush could do, in addressing the Veterans of Foreign Wars, was to say that "America stands where it always has—against aggression, against those who would use force to replace the rule of law." Bush is better at private chats with fellow heads of government than he is at public persuasion. But despite the banal rhetoric, the purposes Bush is pursuing in the Persian Gulf are important.

In recent days we have heard many remarks to the effect that if the sands of Kuwait were dry all the way down, the world would have little trouble controlling its indignation at its conquest. There is some truth in that cynical observation. But the United States is not simply defending oil for itself. Every country in the world, rich and poor, depends upon oil. It is the fuel not just of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

transportation and industry but of civilization itself. An exorbitant price increase—which Hussein surely would impose if he controlled the Gulf and with it 40 percent of the world's supply—would do far more damage to poor countries than to rich ones. The United States, for example, has large energy resources to draw upon, both in its unexploited supplies and in the conservation it has scarcely begun to practice. The poverty-stricken Third World, which doesn't have such options, would be condemned to decades of misery were Hussein to consolidate his control over the price of oil.

In the Persian Gulf the United States is not merely combating an isolated "aggression" by one country against another. It is setting a precedent for collective security action for years to come. Nor is the United States acting, unilaterally, as the "world's policeman." It is more like a chief constable leading an international posse. Much as the United States organized its allies in Europe and the Far East to contain the Soviet Union after World War II, it is now organizing virtually the entire world to isolate and counter Hussein. And to the extent that the United Nations is capable of acting against Hussein, notably in mandating economic sanctions, the United States has acted through the agency of the world body.

In its military response to the crisis, the United States has acted unilaterally or multilaterally as necessary. But the multilateral action almost certainly would not have happened without the unilateral—as Bush, a World War II veteran, understands. It is mostly the American example that has persuaded several Arab and European countries to contribute land forces to the defense of Saudi Arabia. And by declaring its intention to impose its own naval blockade on Iraq, the United States seems to have persuaded the U.N. Security Council to authorize one that may yet be joined by the Soviet Union and Japan.

It's true that the United States and its allies are not defending democracy in this operation. What they are defending is order. Democracy is not a habit in the part of the world in which the United States now finds itself engaged; it is hardly even an aspiration. Pre-invasion Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the other Gulf states are feudal monarchies in which wealth and station are determined by inheritance; political rights and constitutional safeguards scarcely exist; hard work is done by imported labor; and women are barred from useful participation in society. But monarchy is not a spreading movement, even in the Arab world; and one can draw a moral distinction between its shortcomings and the malignant qualities of Hussein's regime, a brutal military dictatorship, which rules by secret police, promotes international terrorism, and foments chaos in the name of Pan-Arabism. Stopping Hussein will hardly bring democracy or even stability to countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. All face challenges from religious fanatics and restive populations. But if Hussein is not stopped, they are likely to be condemned to violence and chaos, which is why—in their own interests, not ours—they have joined in resisting him.

So there is a principled case to be made for the policy that President Bush has forged, although we still doubt that the policy itself will end the long-term threat of Iraqi military power. Bush's announced aim is merely to restore the *status quo ante* in the Persian Gulf—that is, to bring about Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, restoration of the Kuwaiti monarchy, and the release of hostages. Even if Hussein were to agree to all that, it would be a slight and tenuous accomplishment for the mobilization of half the world. And the political reality is that U.S. forces would be obliged to leave the region—which would leave it again defenseless in the face of Hussein's huge military machine. The day after America's departure, he could turn up the pressure again on his neighbors for financial and political concessions—and resume building up his arsenal of nuclear and chemical weapons and missile delivery systems.

The administration hopes that withdrawal would be such a humiliation for Hussein that he would be overthrown from within. But he has just capitulated to another archenemy, Iran, without visible internal consequences. He has shown himself capable of suppressing anything resembling dissent in the most ruthless way imaginable. His army's withdrawal from Kuwait would not end the threat Iraq poses to its neighbors or to the world's interests.

The aim of American policy must be to deal a crippling blow to Iraq's military menace. There are strong hints coming from the Bush administration that it now contemplates containment, keeping a strong U.S. troop presence in the region for years to come. But containment in the Persian Gulf lacks the political underpinning of containment in Europe. The fragile kingdoms of the Gulf will grow increasingly vulnerable to accusations of submitting to American "occupation." They will be prey to nationalistic and religious passions, to terrorism, assassination plots, and inter-Arab condemnation. American resolve, high at the moment, could be worn down by time and terrorism.

We do not see any way to avoid the conclusion that the United States must do what it can to eliminate Iraq's offensive military capability. This does not require a land attack into Kuwait. It can be accomplished by large-scale aerial bombing of Hussein's air force, tank concentrations, missile sites, chemical plants, and nuclear installations. The quicker this is done, the fewer would be the casualties among Western hostages made into human shields by Hussein. It is a horrific decision to condemn innocent people to death—perhaps by the hundreds. But what is the alternative? Five years from now Hussein will have nuclear weapons—and will be in a position to kill innocents by the tens of thousands. Stopping him from a course of aggression and intimidation will be practically impossible, and he—along with every other would-be aggressor in future years—will make the taking of foreign hostages the first move of any campaign. The United States must act, and the sooner the better.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WILL TO WIN: WE'VE STILL GOT IT IN AMERICA.

Nobody knows better than the UAW how important a healthy U.S. auto industry is to our common future. The auto industry directly or indirectly employs two million people and supports leading-edge technologies and processes. It's a bellwether for the future of U.S. manufacturing.

UAW members are putting more than ever into the job of building top quality. We want to continue the rapid quality and productivity gains of recent years. Our goal is to build vehicles that all Americans can be proud to own.

We demand that the companies support that goal. They need to show consistent support for our efforts instead of threatening workers with frequent layoffs and plant closings . . . instead of shifting production to foreign facilities and suppliers. They need to focus on long-term market share instead of short-term profits.

We need stability and security to do the job we want to do and the job that you deserve.

And that's the bottom line: quality products for American consumers.

UAW®

BECAUSE AMERICAN JOBS ARE WORTH FIGHTING FOR

International Union, UAW

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BROKEN CLOCK

"I do not believe involvement in hostilities is imminent," the president told Congress on August 9 when he sent troops to repel the Iraqi threat. Now Baghdad radio has threatened American soldiers with cannibalism, but the president continues to insist that hostilities are not "imminent." He also insists on the term "interdiction" rather than blockade because "blockade" in international law is associated with imminent hostilities.

The purpose of these legal fictions is to avoid the constraints of the War Powers Resolution. If hostilities are "imminent," then the clock of the resolution starts to tick. Sixty days later, if Congress has done nothing, the president has to withdraw the troops. So to keep his military options open, Bush has chosen to deny that hostilities are imminent, even on the verge of the broadest military engagement since Vietnam.

Whatever the course of events in the Gulf, one of Congress's first acts when it returns from recess should be to amend the War Powers Resolution. There is something wrong with a resolution that imposes deadlines for completing military actions. But there is also something wrong with one that allows the president to commit tens of thousands of American troops without formally consulting Congress, let alone winning its approval. This is precisely what the framers of the Constitution—and of the War Powers Resolution—set out to avoid.

Both conservatives and liberals have attacked the resolution as unconstitutional, but few of their arguments are serious. Some conservatives claim that any congressional participation in the decision to deploy troops fetters the president's "implied" powers as commander in chief. But the intent of the framers could hardly be clearer: except when the president is repelling "sudden attacks," he is meant to assume strategic control of the forces only *after* an explicit congressional declaration. Some liberals claim that giving the president a sixty-day blank check is an unconstitutional abdication of Congress's power to declare war; but in theory Congress can cut off funds over the president's veto. In fact, one section of the War Powers Resolution—the section permitting Congress to order the president to withdraw troops from combat by concurrent resolution—might already be invalid under a 1983 Supreme Court decision. But recent history shows that Congress would never have the courage to invoke the section anyway.

The problem with the War Powers Resolution, suggests Harold Koh of Yale Law School, is not that it's unconstitutional, but that it's badly drafted. First, the resolution requires the president to consult with Congress "in every possible instance," but allows the president to be the judge of when that is "possible." Second, it requires consultation with Congress before sending troops abroad, but does not specify how many members must be consulted or how far in advance. Third, the resolution permits the president to file three different types of "reports" to Congress on committing forces abroad. Yet the law's sixty-day clock for removing the troops runs automatically only after a report of "imminent hostilities" is submitted. Simply by his choice of report, the president can evade the resolution's substantive requirements.

The unintended result of the War Powers Resolution is to reverse the constitutional division of power. Congress, by timid inaction, can cause troops to be withdrawn over the commander in chief's objection. And the commander in chief, by extravagant word games, can commit troops without congressional authorization. But the purpose of the resolution—to "insure that the collective judgment of both Congress and the President will apply" to the pursuit of war—is sound.

An amendment to the War Powers Resolution, proposed by Senators Byrd, Nunn, Warner, and Mitchell, would correct the resolution's most obvious flaws. It would create a permanent consultative group, composed of the majority and minority leaders of both Houses and the chairmen and ranking members of the Foreign Affairs, Foreign Relations, Armed Services, and Intelligence committees. It would require the White House to consult regularly with the group, not only hours before or hours after deciding to deploy troops. It would allow the consultative group to introduce a joint resolution for expedited consideration, either specifically authorizing troops or specifically disengaging them, regardless of the president's report. And it would repeal the requirement that troops automatically be withdrawn within sixty days if Congress does nothing at all.

The Byrd-Nunn amendment should appeal to the president as well as to Congress. By removing the automatic cutoff of troops, it removes the incentives for enemies to use the peculiarities of American law as a military asset, delaying their attacks until after the war powers clock has expired. At the same time, by ensuring an early resolution of support, it buffers the president against national recrimination once the initial enthusiasm of deployment has faded.

If Congress passes the Byrd-Nunn amendment, President Bush should sign it. There has been an odd dichotomy between word and deed in the president's dealings with Congress in foreign affairs. In practice, he has informally consulted with congressional leaders. But in his public statements, he has shown an unbecoming disregard for congressional prerogatives. When Bush vetoed the Moynihan amendment—which would have prohibited American officials from soliciting foreign funds to carry out activities for which Congress has cut off aid—he came close to claiming that the president can do whatever he likes in foreign affairs. And last spring the office

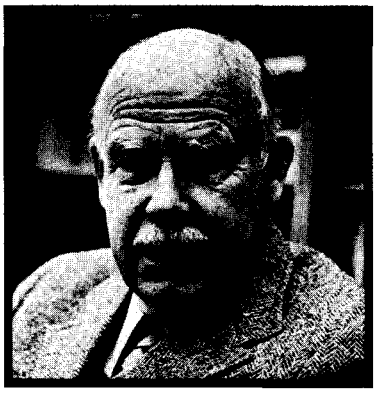
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Bush's legal adviser made the extraordinary claim that there are "no shared powers" under the Constitution.

Bush's early military decisions have been bold and sound. By availing himself of Congress's war powers, Bush would strengthen the nation's staying power in the difficult weeks ahead.

NOTEBOOK

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY: Richard L. Strout was the most venerable and most venerated member of the NEW REPUBLIC family. For the forty years from March 8, 1943, to April 18, 1983, Mr. Strout was "TRB from Washington," and he remained a contributing editor of this magazine until his death. He had the respect, admiration, and affection of all of us who were proud to be his colleagues. To his wife, Ernestine Strout, and to his five children, eleven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, we extend our deepest sympathy. (For an appreciation of Mr. Strout, see this week's TRB.)



RICHARD L. STROUT (1898-1990)

MALICE ON THE ROPES: Ill-will won't have a chance at the Oslo Conference on the "Anatomy of Hate: Resolving Conflict Through Dialogue and Democracy," sponsored by the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity and the Norwegian Nobel Committee. Participants in such sessions as "Is Hate Inevitable?" and "Coping With Hate: Four Perspectives" will include Günther Grass, Jimmy Carter, Elena Bonner, Adam Michnik, François Mitterrand, Vyautas Landsbergis, Vaclav Havel (doesn't he have a country to run?), Barbara Walters, A. M. Rosenthal, Allan Boesak, and a whole galaxy of Scandinavians. It's hard to criticize so high-minded an exercise, but it does sound suspiciously like an Iowa caucus for the Nobel Peace Prize.

MAYOR BARRY, CALL YOUR OFFICE: A sign in the District of Columbia's Municipal Building proclaims:

> Citizens of the District of Columbia are entitled to have complete confidence in the integrity of their government. Therefore, employees of the District of Columbia shall at all times maintain a high level of ethical conduct in connection with the performance of their official duties, and shall expose corruption wherever discovered. Employees shall avoid any action which might result in or create the appearance of
> a. Using public office for private gain;
> b. giving improper preferential treatment to any person;
> c. impeding government efficiency and economy;
> d. losing independence and impartiality;
> e. making a government decision outside official channels; or
> f. affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the government or its operations.
> Any person aware of fraud or corruption in the District of Columbia Government call 628-TIPS.
> Marion Barry, Jr.
> Mayor.

Anyone got a quarter?

SKINNER IN A BOX: At least one myth about B. F. Skinner was laid to rest along with Skinner himself in late August. The obituaries made clear that, no, he didn't rear his daughter in a Skinner box. A few other misconceptions could be usefully demolished before his legacy crystallizes. First: No, he wasn't an authoritarian, a totalitarian, a control freak. In urging that the behavior of children be more consciously shaped, he wasn't calling for *more* control; he argued cogently that human development is already controlled by an array of environmental forces, and the question is whether they will be random and often pernicious or systematic and, if possible, benign. His goal, as embodied in the utopian novel *Walden Two*, was a world without avarice, jealousy, and war. Nothing wrong with that. Did he overstate the prospects for such a world? Certainly. Are we now finding that some ugly human dispositions are not easily neutralized? Yes. But let's be clear: the growing emphasis on genetic factors in behavior doesn't mean that behavior is hopelessly rigid, any more than Skinner's pioneering work in behavior modification meant that it is infinitely malleable. What the genes define are the channels—sometimes narrow but sometimes broad and steadily expanding—through which behavioral development can flow. The precise route taken depends on the environment—often, indeed, on the very rules of positive and negative reinforcement articulated by Skinner. Further, notwithstanding the current willingness in psychology to talk about "mental structures"—something Skinner thought best avoided—there remains today a deeper adherence to his methodology. To the extent that there is now real progress in psychology, whether in "evolutionary psychology" (in which evolutionary biology helps explain and illuminate mental structures) or "cognitive science" (in which theories of mental structure are modeled and tested in computers), it is largely because of obedience to two of Skinner's favorite sermons: that the basic currency of psychology must be publicly observable phenomena (that meant only behavior in Skinner's day, but today it arguably includes the "behavior" of mind-simulating computers); and that psychological theories be stated with such clarity

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and unambiguous upshot as to generate testable predictions. Skinner fought what the best psychologists are today fighting: the reliance on hazy mental constructs whose validity must forever remain a matter of opinion. And he fought for what may in the not-too-distant future be common: the use of human psychology—once it has been firmly reconstituted as a science—on behalf of humans. •

CAUCASIAN POSTCARD

RETURN TO PYATIGORSK

By Walter Laqueur

I first visited Pyatigorsk in 1960, when the Northern Caucasus was just opened to foreigners (see "Caucasian Diary," TNR, November 21, 1960). I arrived in the middle of the night, and felt something of the old romantic magic of the place—Santa Fe, more dilapidated, placed at the edge of the Orient. I came to like Pyatigorsk, with its magnificent panoramic views and abundance of natural mineral springs. Back then it took fifty-four hours by train from Moscow or seven by air. Today the flying time from Moscow is two hours, and Pyatigorsk, once a provincial town of 70,000 inhabitants, has more than doubled in population. A car was a rarity then; now we are stuck in constant traffic jams. Luckily, then as now, a walk through the streets of a provincial town like this one provides a more vivid and accurate look at middle Russia than the view one gets from the window of a Moscow limousine.

Pyatigorsk is part of Stavropol district, where Mikhail Gorbachev was raised and made his early political career. But this is not yet Gorbachev country. Though the local Party leadership has been replaced in some towns, glasnost and political change have made only modest progress. Here the Party still seems in firm control. People are now far more willing to talk openly, but the idea of a multiparty system still seems outlandish.

Very little happens in Pyatigorsk unless the first Party secretary agrees, since he quite frequently is the city's chief executive as well, just as Gorbachev functions as head of both Party and state. Local factories get their instructions from the ministry or the Central Planning Board in Moscow, but the general tendency is toward decentralization, which makes local enterprises increasingly subject to the orders and fiats of the local Party leadership. Some local Party secretaries may go along with the Gorbachev policy, many may not. In czarist Russia they used to say, "Russia is great and the czar is far away"; this still applies, by and large, despite the more modern means of communications.

Pyatigorsk and the neighboring regions are resort areas and are wealthy by Soviet standards. There is nothing of the drabness and the poverty found in the cities of non-black earth areas of northern Russia. The sun shines far more often, making even dilapidated houses more pleasing to the eye. But there has been a good deal of new building, mainly the massive blocks in the suburbs of one- or two-room apartments. Unlike in Moscow, where the difference in the standard of living between the *nomenklatura* and the rest of society used to be enormous, in a smaller town a leading Party secretary concerned about his future career will lead a relatively modest life. But he is still immensely powerful. He can, for example, sabotage the "export" of goods from his district to other parts of the Soviet Union, at least for a while. People are accustomed to considering the Party the main engine of administration, the economy, and just about everything else. The system has not worked well, but they fear that another system would not work at all. Democracy at the grass roots has a long way to go.

In 1960 I stayed at the only hotel in town, which dated from the days of Lermontov and Pushkin. Now we proceed to a modern, fourteen-story hotel with spacious rooms and almost every comfort. But I miss the old *gostinitsa* (guest house), where the women waved from the window when I left for the day and where there were always some friendly words and a cup of tea on return. The fashion-conscious young ladies in the hotel's service bureau shun the head shawls of their mothers; they would pass any day in Moscow and places west. They speak English, German, and for all I know even Japanese.

The large pictures of Lenin, Stalin, and Kalinin that adorned the entrance hall of the old hotel have vanished, but there are still many more banners in the streets than in Moscow ("Long live Soviet-Bulgarian friendship," "We shall fight for perestroika," "Party and people are one," etc.). Stalin and Kalinin have been replaced by a modern bar (payment, alas, only in hard currency) and a very loud discotheque, which holds greater fascination for locals than for foreign guests. The Russian right is warning in ever shriller prose against the evils of Western mass culture. But Pyatigorsk is not Tehran, and the strictures will doubtless have little effect.

In the evening we watch the Party Congress on television (the afternoon is devoted to Wimbledon and the world soccer championship). Gorbachev is trying hard to downgrade the importance of the Politburo. As he and his supporters see it, the Party should no longer engage in administering political and economic life. But it does not work even in Leningrad, where a reformist city council has been elected. The bureaucrats ignore the newly elected city leaders, and continue to report to and receive orders from the first Party secretary. The foreign correspondents in Moscow announce the im-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Join Philips Classics in a once-in-a-lifetime recording event.

Mozart

A BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

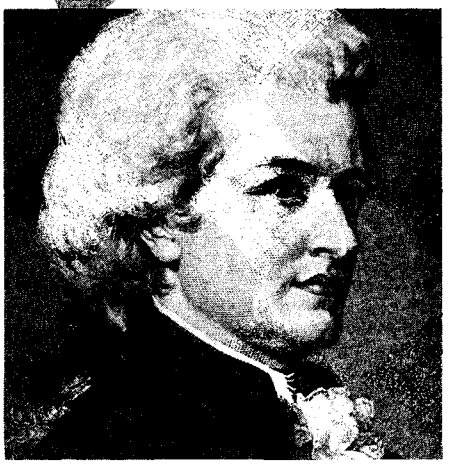
The myth, mystery and magic of Mozart are but pale shadows of the drama that was the man. When Mozart died, at 35, he left behind a monumental legacy. As the child genius of a family of geniuses he became the toast of Europe, "the little wizard" as he was dubbed in Vienna. His exploits would become the stuff of legends. But when he died, he died a pauper and was laid to rest in an unmarked grave.

A MONUMENTAL RECORDING PROJECT.

In 1991 the world commemorates the death, 200 years ago, of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. As we prepare to honor his greatness, Philips Classics will celebrate him with THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION. Starting in October 1990, the COMPLETE MOZART EDITION will assemble all the works Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed, collected together for the first time in any recorded medium and issued on CD in specially designed packaging. This is a series unlike any other, monumental in scope and comprising all known authentic, original and complete works plus as many fragments or movements as could possibly be performed. THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION will contain full-digital recordings, many of which will appear on CD for the first time. And many newly recorded works, varying from a complete opera to a 17 second *Andante,* including some music never heard before. This is the most monumental recording project ever attempted. THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION is a connoisseur's library of the best of Symphonies, Operas and Chamber Music.

EVERY NOTE HE EVER WROTE.

In October, we will send you the 12 CD set of **The 41 Symphonies** to audition in your home Free for 15 days. Performed by



The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields under Sir Neville Marriner, you will receive "The Jupiter", "The Haffner", in fact, all the glorious symphonic works Mozart wrote (1-41). Each month thereafter, and continuing as long as you maintain your series subscription, we will ship additional volumes, each for your Free 15 day audition. You may cancel your subscription at any time.

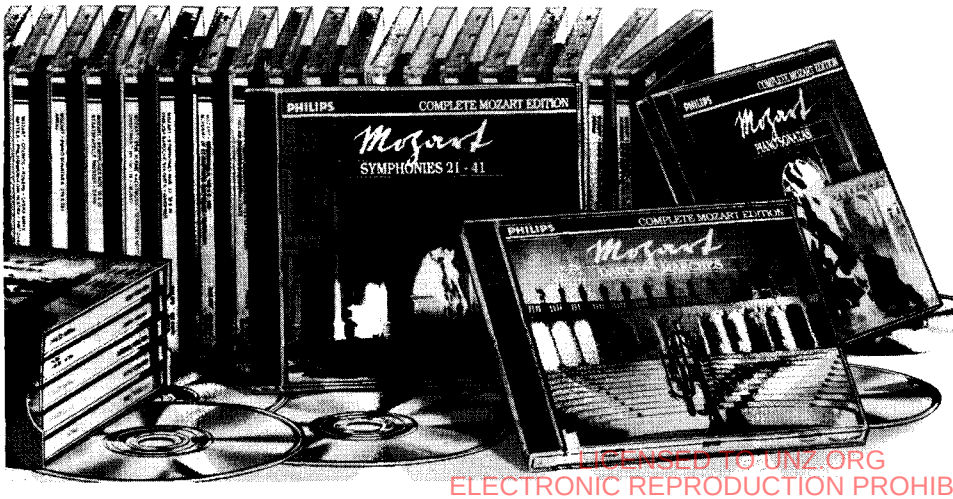
As your series subscription continues (monthly through December '91), future releases will include the **Serenades & Divertimenti**, including the famous "Eine kleine Nachtmusik"; the **Dances**, the **Piano Concertos**—27 glorious works, including the early Concertos after J.C. Bach; **Music for Violin & Orchestra**, including the Concerto for Piano & Violin; the **Wind Concertos**; the **Chamber Music**, including 10 unfinished fragments; the **Piano Music** plus Mozart's very first composition written when he was five; the **Masses & Sacred Works**; the **Organ Sonatas**; the **Oratorios**; **Concert Arias & Vocal Music**; **Theatre & Ballet Music**; the **Operas**; **Diversa & Rarities**.

MOZART'S LIFE'S WORK... A Lifetime of Listening Pleasure.

THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION comprises 180 CDs of some of the most glorious music ever written. There will be many Mozart sets issued during the Bicentennial year, but this is the *only* COMPLETE MOZART EDITION—and best of all, you will receive these volumes immediately upon release, culminating with the final volumes in December 1991. THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION features the finest artists of our time: The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Sir Neville Marriner, Alfred Brendel, Mitsuko Uchida, The Beaux Arts Trio, Kiri te Kanawa, Jessye Norman, Sir Colin Davis and many more. This is the Complete Mozart Edition, in 44 volumes, sent to you in 15 monthly releases from October 1990 to December 1991. Each release includes between ten and fifteen CDs at the special price of $7.95 per disc delivered to your home.

THE MOZART GAZETTE Your Bonus Guide to the Bicentennial.

In addition, you will also receive the quarterly MOZART GAZETTE, your official guide to the Mozart anniversary celebration featuring forthcoming releases in the series, news of the artists and orchestras and an international preview of events in the Mozart Bicentennial Celebration. THE MOZART GAZETTE is yours, Free, as long as you remain a subscriber to THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION.



RSVP

Reserve your subscription to THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION at the special price of $7.95 per disc plus tax (we pay shipping). Write to:

THE COMPLETE MOZART EDITION
c/o The International Preview Society
P.O. Box 91179, Dept. 49
Indianapolis, IN 46291-0179

Charge your subscription to your American Express and Optima, VISA, MasterCard, Diners Club or Discover Card. Your card will be charged monthly for each shipment.

For Fastest Service, have your credit card ready and use our toll-free number:

1-800-W-AMADEUS
(1-800-926-2338)

© 1990 BMG Direct Marketing, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pending collapse of the Communist regime, but the "crisis" has not yet reached Pyatigorsk or Stavropol. In 1917 the fate of Russia was decided in Petrograd and Moscow, but there is no certainty it will happen again. "Moscow" is quite unpopular in the rest of the country these days.

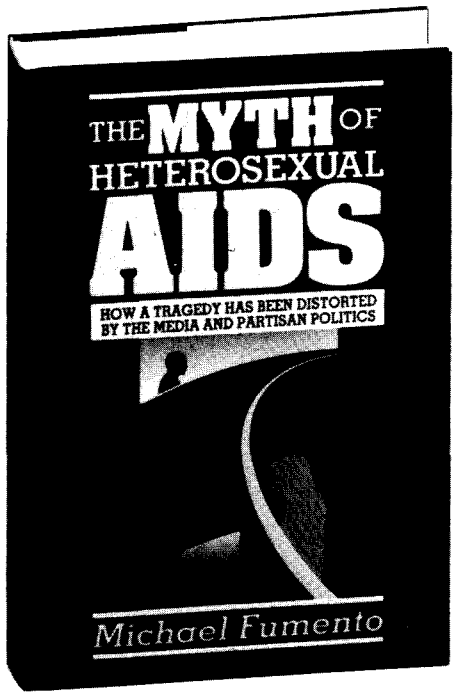
The two kolkhoz (cooperative farm) markets are the busiest places by far in Pyatigorsk. In the mornings and on weekends they simply cannot be approached by car. Thirty years ago I wrote that these markets were bound to disappear as the basic supplies in the state shops continued to improve. I could not have been more mistaken. There is virtually nothing now in the state shops except bread, milk, kefir, jars of fruit and juices, and canned cabbage salad. The markets, meanwhile, are flourishing. There are plenty of vegetables and fruits, and the quality of the cherries, apricots, and watermelons compares favorably with American supermarkets. The prices are high by Soviet standards; three little pickled gherkins cost more than the collected works of Lermontov. The price of meat has doubled over the last quarter. The people grumble, but half of them can still afford to buy at the farmers' markets.

The state shops are empty partly as the result of panic buying—the consequence of Ryzhkov's famous speech a few weeks earlier announcing that prices would go up. But the situation already had been deteriorating, and no cure for Soviet agriculture is in sight. I toured the countryside one day with an expert who, like most experts, was all in favor of the privatization of agriculture. Well then, I asked, what were they waiting for? The government had given the green light to those eager to rent land, yet we had not seen many farmers. During the past few decades, he explained, the very infrastructure of Soviet agriculture has been destroyed. Two out of three villages have disappeared. If a man were now to rent land, it may lack a house and even roads leading to it, so he may find himself ten or twenty miles from his holdings. And where would the farmer get the capital and the machinery, or enough fuel for harvesting and transport? In any case, some 20 to 30 percent of the harvest would be lost to factors such as spoilage on the way from field to customer.

Pyatigorsk and the neighboring towns have their share of cooperatives, or private-sector enterprises (there are some 4.5 million in the Soviet Union), but their impact on the general economic situation is small. In addition to the lack of capital and machinery, the attitude of the local authorities is less than helpful. Most enterprisers are concentrated in the service sector—selling cloth, flowers (plentiful and beautiful), scrap metal. Some engage in ingenious operations of doubtful legality: they drive new Soviet cars (costing 30,000 rubles, or about ten years' salary for the average Soviet worker) to Warsaw, Prague, or Budapest, where they are sold for $3,000. For this sum a third-hand Opel or Volkswagen can be acquired in Vienna, which, in turn, sells for 120,000 rubles in the Soviet Union.

Who will get AIDS?

Will AIDS spread to the general heterosexual community? The scientific evidence indicates that it will not, according to Michael Fumento. In this carefully reasoned analysis, he shows how the very real tragedy of the disease has been overshadowed by a collective hysteria often fueled by partisan politics and the naivete of the press.



"The best documented, most provocative and informative AIDS book since *And the Band Played On.*"—*Booklist*

"A signal contribution to our understanding of the AIDS epidemic in the United States."—Alexander Langmuir, M.D., former Chief Epidemiologist, Centers for Disease Control

"A merciless—though often legitimate—indictment of the purveyors of panic."—Patricia Cohen, *Washington Monthly*

"The arguments, statistics and perceptions that he adduces to support his position appear almost as irrefutable as they are controversial."—David Shaw, *New York Times Book Review*

BASIC BOOKS

A New Republic Book
$22.95 at bookstores or direct from
Basic Books 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.
Toll-free with credit card **800-638-3030.** Available in Canada from Harper & Collins

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Some of the new enterprises may be criminal in nature—the terms "Mafia" and "Mafiosi" are heard frequently these days. But the new organizations promoting economic development, such as the United Cooperative Alliance or the Association of Soviet Entrepreneurs, are perfectly legal; their basic problem is their unpopularity with the bureaucracy and most of the working class. Something like a cultural revolution is needed to inculcate a spirit of initiative and enterprise in the Soviet Union. And this is unlikely to happen soon.

This is high season in Pyatigorsk and the adjacent spas such as Essentuki and Zhelesnovodsk. Thousands of visitors from all over the Soviet Union arrive to take the waters, following the advice of their doctors, who, like German physicians (and unlike British and American ones), believe in the magic healing properties of such mineral waters as the famous local Narzan.

I followed their example without any ill effects, but I prefer the taste of the ice cream sold in the open air parlor in the center of Zhelesnovodsk. My neighbor at the table works at the local stud farm and tries to persuade me to buy either a Siglavi (attractive and harmonious) or a Koheilan (massive yet graceful). He brushes aside the argument that my Washington apartment is not suitable for keeping an Arabian purebred. Then he spots three ladies cleaning up the lawn in front of the parlor. "I wonder whom they expect," he says. "I have not seen gardeners here for a long time." A week later the reason for the preparations was clear. Gorbachev, accompanied by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, stopped by at the ice cream parlor while their press officers in the town hall across the street were telling a hundred breathless journalists that a historical agreement about the future of Germany had just been reached. So remote Zhelesnovodsk had its hour of glory, and I missed it by a few days.

WALTER LAQUEUR's *Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations* will be published this fall by Scribners.

The hangover from the Party Congress.

LOST IN A FOG

By Yuri Afanasyev

MOSCOW

The results of the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union continue to reverberate throughout the country. The CPSU managed to confirm that it is the major obstacle to profound transformations in our society. To the accompaniment of talk about perestroika, markets, and so on, the Party demonstrated once again that in essence it is fighting to preserve the system of power relations that formed over the last seventy years.

It is often said that perestroika has achieved nothing. But if we look at perestroika the way it was conceived by the Party apparat, then it has succeeded handsomely. It was conceived as a way of restructuring society without changing its foundations—and from that point of view everything is moving along very nicely. The closing document of the Congress testifies to the system's extraordinary aptitude for self-preservation, the point of which is to meld Party and state structures into one. The document even manages to appropriate words that are contrary to the spirit and meaning of the CPSU—"market," "multiparty system," "glasnost," and so on. It sucks out their meanings, and accommodates them to its own needs, all in order to survive.

The departure of such odious figures as Yegor Ligachev from the Party leadership is also an aspect of its self-preservation. The same applies to the tactical triumph of Mikhail Gorbachev. At certain moments the system pushes forward its most rational and realistic figures, politicians who can bolster its strength. And it rejects those who discredit it with blatantly reactionary behavior and whom, in any case, it no longer needs. Through this type of mimicry the system's form changes, but not its essence.

But even more to the point, a close reading of the decisions of the CPSU Congress leaves an overpowering impression of vagueness, ambivalence, contradictoriness, and inconsistency. There is so much of this in the Congress documents that at first you ask yourself: How could they have not noticed, how could they have let these things through? But then you see that this is no oversight. It is a reflection of the real situation of the Party and the regime—albeit in an inconsistent and contradictory form, since the Party as an institution is resisting radical structural change with all its might.

In the Party's programmatic statement, "Toward a Humane, Democratic Socialism," published on the front page of the July 15 edition of *Pravda*, we read: "As an urgent measure the party proposes: . . . The development in the current year of a new agreement on the union of republics as sovereign states." That seems unambivalent. But then we turn to the jump, on page three, where we read that the Party "considers that based on the interests of the peoples themselves and the tendency of world processes toward integration, it is important to maintain the wholeness of the renewed Union as a dynamic multinational state." In other words, the USSR is a single state.

Which should we believe—page one or page three? How can "sovereign states" exist within another state? Naturally, they can join a union, but it must be either a confederation headed by an organ like the European Parliament or a commonwealth on the principle of the British one. But there can be no "superstate" with a Council of Ministers, a Supreme

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet, and commensurate state attributes.

Such unclarified moments abound. "The Congress feels: the profound sources of the crisis are not in the wrongness of the idea of socialism itself, but in the deformations to which it was subjected in the past." This is Orwellian Newspeak. I have no doubts that the Party program document was prepared by literate people. And they must have known that no static "idea of socialism" has ever existed in time or space. Instead there was always a complex of ideas—highly mutable, constantly developing, often contradictory. As early as the end of the last century the "idea of socialism" was already divided into two tendencies—the orthodox, dogmatic one (whose representatives Engels himself called "priests of the Marxist parish") and the revisionist one (Kautsky and Bernstein in the West, the "legal Marxists" and their ilk in Russia), which criticized the founders for certain obvious incompatibilities with the tenets of science and with social experience and practice. In the Leninist period the Bolshevik interpretation of the socialist idea appeared; and subsequently the idea of socialism developed in various directions—the Stalinist interpretation, the Frankfurt school, the Gramsci school, and the contemporary social-democratic interpretation, among others, with a multitude of nuances and differences. So which one is being discussed in the Congress documents? The one depicted by the early Marx or by the late Marx, or by later interpreters? But of course the smoke and mirrors is intentional. Along with the vows of loyalty to Marxism-Leninism and the "socialist choice," it is nothing but an attempt to leave the foundations of our life unshaken.

In place of all those calls to "get rid of deformations," an honest document would have given a clear explanation of the society that has formed in our country. Without any isms it would have identified who owns property in our country and who wields power under our political system. Normal social science categories would have sufficed for that—without the traditional genuflections to the founders, or the breathless repetitions of vows of loyalty to the "idea of socialism."

The document's pronouncements on property are part of the smoke and mirrors. Half-baked concepts—such as "labor private property," which from an economic point of view is the same gibberish as "the regulated market"—are trotted out in order to protect our main property owner: the state, which has been grafted onto the Party (or the Party onto the state, as you prefer). In the meantime, those who labor will remain merely the users, not the owners, of the land and of the means of production. No leases, no "family teams," no "self-financing,"• or any other lame economic proposals can disguise this. The relations of property can be changed only cardinally: turn over the land, the enterprises, the service industries, the trade organizations, and so on to those who work in those spheres. And make them not only the users but also the distributors of property.

What is the worth of the Congress's assertions that the CPSU will not permit "exploitation of man"? Millennia of history have shown that the state can act as the most powerful and ruthless exploiter of all. We are convinced of this daily by our own experiences. In 1917 we did not liquidate private property; we merely replaced many property holders with one, the worst one, which concentrated everything in its hands—the state. But the Congress document intentionally confuses the concept of exploitation with the use of hired labor.

If perestroika remains nothing more than "getting rid of deformations" and the foundations will still be considered "good," then we will have to flounder on in the contradictions, half-measures, and vagueness that characterize the political line of the present leadership. And we will not live to see any serious changes.

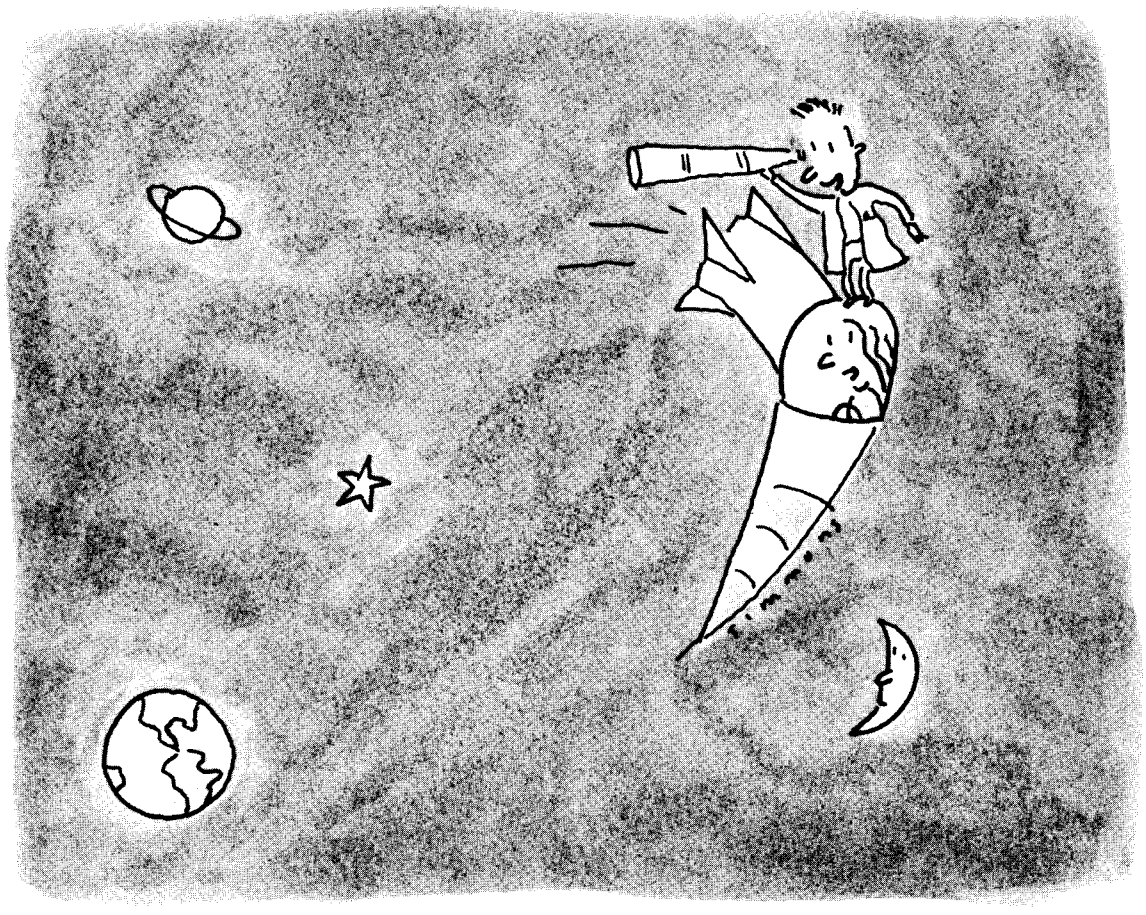
We have forces that are capable of becoming an alternative to this future. These include the Interregional Deputies Group, the members of which represent populous constituencies. They include the Democratic Bloc, which garnered more than two-thirds of the vote in elections to regional soviets in parts of Russia and which won control of Moscow and Leningrad. They include the national movements in the Baltics, the Ukrainian Rukh, the growing Popular Front in Byelorussia, and the various social groupings in Georgia, which, for the moment, are fragmented. They include the independent workers' movements, especially the miners. And they include the new democratic parties.

However, exaggerating the current strength of the radical democratic movements is as dangerous as overlooking them. Their weakness is in their disunity, but not only in that. Our democracy lacks an economic basis. None of us is sovereign in the full meaning of that word, for in the final analysis the kolkhoz (collective) farmer, the factory worker, and the intellectual all work for hire for the state. We are all on its leash. The length of the leash can vary, but everyone feels its tug; and not only on the job but when you need an apartment, a trip to a sanatorium, or a spot in kindergarten for your child.

This total dependency on the state forces today's democratic movement to rely too heavily on people's negative attitudes to the regime. There is very little positive energy to draw on—again, because there is no economic basis for it. That is why it is so important for the democratic groups to get together and fight for changes that exist only in the realm of lip service—say, a peasant's ability to leave the kolkhoz if he wishes with corresponding property and land. This is not happening, because the new laws on property and on land guarantee nothing of the sort (not even help from the state), but merely declare a vague right to leave.

Right through the Party Congress, President Gorbachev's position toward the radical democratic forces was relentlessly negative. Either he waved them away disdainfully, like annoying flies, or he denigrated them with insulting words—"demagogic chatter," "musicians of politics," and so on. The president's attitude,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Consider The News From A Whole New Perspective.

Journey beyond the headlines to a world of news and knowledge on National Public Radio's All Things Considered.

Whether it's a superpower summit or an expedition to the top of Mount Everest . . . we give each story something that's missing from most news broadcasts . . . time.

The time we take makes All Things Considered a different kind of news . . . refreshingly intelligent and insightful . . . with commentary that challenges and ideas that energize.

Take a journey through today's news . . .

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED®

We Think You'll Find The Difference Considerable.

Check local listings for your public radio station or call NPR at (202) 822-2323.

National Public Radio® News

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

while not justifiable, was explicable: it comes out of the political culture of a monopolistic ruling party, for which a dictatorial tone and rejection of dialogue is a primary characteristic. But there was a more concrete explanation, too. Gorbachev, as a realistic politician, saw the weakness and disunity of the radical democratic forces. So for most of the past two years he naturally leaned in the direction from which he sensed real, organized strength: the direction of the military-industrial complex, the party and state bureaucracy, and the united bailiffs of the feudal kolkhoz-sovkhoz (collective farm-state farm) system.

Very recently, however, Gorbachev's attitude toward the left forces began to change. Again, as a realistic politician (though one who lags behind fatally), he saw that the majority of the people today oppose the apparat, and consequently oppose him. This mass opposition is not simply a function of "populist" hatred of all authority, as some Party conservatives claim. It comes from people's unsatisfied (and under today's regime, unsatisfiable) demand for bread, freedom, and self-respect.

Gorbachev appears to have noticed not only that his own authority has plummeted but also that the democratic forces are increasingly negotiating with him from a position of strength. He has begun turning around. First came a meeting with radical journalists who write on economic themes. More important, Gorbachev followed up his gesture by taking his first real political step to the left in many months: he met with Boris Yeltsin. This was not just a symbolic meeting, but an agreement to radicalize economic reform and to speed the transformation to a market economy on the basis of "500 Days," the draft program that has been developed by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic. For the first time there is a real opportunity to form a broad center-left coalition, without which the profound structural changes required in the transition to post-communism will be impossible.

This turn of events seems to call for sincere rejoicing. But there is anxiety, too. The two parties that have come to an agreement about the future of the whole country (which country?) are the Center and Russia (and is it all of Russia at that?). In other words, in the conditions of a disintegrating USSR and growing ethnic suspiciousness, this meeting could be perceived as an agreement between the Center and the Center. What about the other republics? Accounts of the meeting said that the republics' proposals on economic reform will also be taken into account. But is it enough merely to take their proposals into account? Wouldn't it be better to have everybody work together every step of the way?

So this is how we live now. A flash of hope, a reason to rejoice! And immediately, new difficulties and even more complex problems.

YURI AFANASYEV is rector of the Historical Archives Institute in Moscow and co-chairman of the Interregional Group of People's Deputies. This article was translated from the Russian by Antonina W. Bouis.

The racial wages of misogyny.

NEW YORK STORIES

By Jim Sleeper

NEW YORK CITY

As the Howard Beach, Tawana Brawley, Bensonhurst, and Central Park jogger cases have erupted one after another over the past five years, public discourse about race in New York has turned less on issues like jobs, housing, and education, and more on emblematic violence in the streets. Nightmarish racial confrontations, followed by community uproar and nationally publicized trials, have provided a forum for the charges of white racism and conspiracy by attorneys Alton Maddox Jr., C. Vernon Mason, and the Rev. Al Sharpton. Fortunately, for the most part racially mixed juries have concentrated on the facts instead of the sideshow, vindicating both the criminal justice system and the victims (in the Brawley case the victims were the men falsely accused of rape). Yet the politics of paroxysm that has grown up around the cases refuses to die. And for all of the press attention lavished on Maddox, Mason, Sharpton, and their supporters, one of its ugliest manifestations has been largely overlooked: their rhetoric trumpets the hatred of women. Somehow, in too much of what passes for black activism, woman-hating and charges of white racism have become inextricably intertwined.

Misogyny has been a trope in racially charged cases outside of New York, such as those of Gus Savage, a black representative from Chicago, and D.C. Mayor Marion Barry. Young black men in Washington can be seen wearing T-shirts reading, "I saw the tape. The goddamned bitch set him up." The depredations of 2 Live Crew are nationwide. Whites too have exploited racial fears and sexual violence. In Boston early this year a white man named Charles Stuart managed to combine lethal violence against his pregnant wife with a calculated contempt for blacks—and to have his story instantly accepted by most of the city. The 1989 murder of Yusef Hawkins in Bensonhurst was precipitated by white youths angered by interracial dating on their turf. Yet even when white racism and misogyny have boiled over, they haven't taken on the force of a movement for "social justice" led by clerics and respected community organizers. That is precisely what has been happening in New York's black community.

Those who followed the tactics of Sharpton, Maddox, and Mason after Howard Beach first scented the poison in 1987, when Maddox defended one of two black men charged with slashing the white model Marla Hanson.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He demanded an acquittal on the grounds that Hanson's hysterical racism had caused her to frame her assailants in order to cover up for a white man who, Maddox claimed, had done the deed but with whom she shared a "code of silence" for reasons of love. Maddox described Hanson as "a girl from Texas [with] a lot of racial hang-ups, racial stereotypes. . . . Just the simple sight of two black men . . . and she went absolutely nuts." And he told the jury that Hanson "was after every man in this city who had a woman," adding that she "preyed on men."

It is common, if unjustifiable, for defense attorneys to impugn the integrity of female victims in sexual assault cases, but Hanson's was not such a case. She was slashed in front of her apartment by strangers who made no sexual advances. Seizing upon the allegation that Hanson's white landlord had paid for the attack in a feud over her tenancy, Maddox concocted his tale of intrigue involving a white slasher. Yet, partly because he was still a hero for having forced the state to appoint a special prosecutor in the Howard Beach case, his vicious cross-examination of Hanson drew support from black activists.

Soon afterward, fifteen-year-old Tawana Brawley's claim that she'd been kidnapped and raped by a gang of white men, including law enforcement officers, brought to the surface an archetype, seared into black memory, of the most intimate sort of exploitation. Under the ministrations of Maddox, Mason, and Sharpton, even the likelihood that her story was a hoax was made to echo an equally venerable archetype of suffering: for centuries whites had falsely accused blacks of raping white women. That whites themselves would now taste victimization by lie seemed to give any number of otherwise intelligent people a certain satisfaction.

Repeatedly, on the black radio station WLIB and in press conferences with stunned reporters, Mason and Maddox opened a spigot of lurid psychosexual fantasies. Mason accused state Attorney General Robert Abrams of masturbating over photos of Brawley, for example, and Maddox declared that "white men want to do to Tawana what they're afraid to do to their own women." The city's black dailies reported and embellished these charges in a tone that can only be described as gleeful outrage.

In the depths of this nightmare, Hugh Pearson, a young black writer, tried to explain the allure of Brawley's tale even for blacks who couldn't reconcile it with the facts of the case. The communal delirium was more than just "a long pent-up anger at the history of coerced sexual relations" between black women and white men, Pearson wrote. The truth that blacks are racially mixed, not a "proudly distinct racial group, strikes at the core self-image of black Americans in a unique and ironic manner: it undermines the appeals of Brawley's champions to racial solidarity. An irreconcilable tension develops between black anger at past sexual violation and the undeniable truth of blacks' interracial heritage. . . . At stake are the images not only of black 'purity,' but also of black manhood. Humiliation, Pearson wrote, "has dogged black men who could not protect and care for their own." In the Brawley psychodrama, black men could at last come to the rescue of one of their violated women. Horrific stuff. The use of a confused fifteen-year-old as a prop in a pathetic fantasy of historic redemption is, of course, an abuse of her. Forced miscegenation is transmuted into misogyny.

Equally outrageous was the white left's opportunistic handling of this anguished confusion. As Brawley's tale began to unravel in the spring of 1988, *The Nation* published a piece on its implications by Albany-based activist Jeff Jones. He recounted two racial incidents in the Hudson Valley and argued that Brawley had served as an organizing tool for marches against racism. "In the weeks ahead, the mainstream press is likely to focus on whether the Brawley family's account of what happened to Tawana is accurate. But more important is the exposure of racist violence . . . in the Hudson Valley and around the country." After the case had fallen apart, *The Nation* let anthropologist Stanley Diamond try his hand. In cultural perspective, if not in reality, he wrote, "it doesn't matter whether the crime occurred or not. . . . It was described with skill and controlled hysteria by the black actors as the epitome of degradation, a repellent model of what actually happens to too many black women. . . . It may be asking too much of the white community to excuse the Brawley deceit; but they misunderstand it at their peril."

William Kunstler, a staunch supporter of Maddox and Mason, put out much the same line in an interview with *New York Newsday*: "It makes no difference whether the attack on Tawana really happened. . . . It doesn't disguise the fact that a lot of young black women are treated the way she said she was treated. [Maddox and Mason] now have an issue with which they can grab the headlines and launch a vigorous attack on the criminal justice system."

Nothing can excuse this astounding indulgence of lies and its implicit contempt for the history of black women's suffering and for decent working-class white opinion in the Hudson Valley. Why couldn't Diamond or Kunstler find in this case even a faint echo of the fable of the boy who cried wolf? Diamond's condescension to whites who misunderstood the Brawley deceit "at their peril" is breathtaking. At his own peril, he misunderstands the importance of factual truth to mythmaking in public discourse. By his logic, it wouldn't have mattered if the Scottsboro Boys had really committed the rapes with which they were charged in 1931.

In fact, the case of the Scottsboro Boys was exhumed as a precedent for the black and Latino youths charged with assaulting and raping the Central Park jogger. Reports that she'd been bludgeoned nearly to death loosed a torrent of white rage that had been seething in the wake of the Brawley hoax. Clearly reveling in that fury, Maddox told an audience on WLIB that the Central Park rape story was itself a hoax. Who, he asked suggestively, had been allowed to see the victim before her

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suspiciously "miraculous" recovery? That Maddox and a colleague had watched one defendant break down on videotape while looking at photos of the battered woman somehow didn't matter.

Wilbert Tatum, editor of the black weekly *Amsterdam News*, referred repeatedly to the Central Park trial as a "lynching." Abandoning journalistic canons, his paper, another weekly, *The City Sun*, and WLIB talk show host Gary Byrd all publicized the jogger's name. They argued, at least in part, that she deserved no more privacy than Brawley had gotten from the "white press"—neglecting to note that Brawley was the first "rape victim" ever to have called a press conference before phoning a district attorney.

Then Sharpton actually brought Tawana Brawley to the trial—to call attention, he said, to the double standard the criminal justice system uses for whites and blacks who charge rape. Many women told reporters that any lingering faith they'd had in Brawley's story vanished forever when they saw the smartly dressed teenager shaking hands amicably with the Central Park defendants. Sharpton even plans to use the collapse of prosecutor Elizabeth Lederer's marriage during the trial as part of one of the defendants' appeals. He told *The New York Post*: "It added to her hostility, her frame of mind."

By now it seems clear that most of the city has rejected the delusional world inhabited by Sharpton, Maddox, and their followers. Yet this development may well please them. It confirms the imagery of implacable white hatred they have long painted as the background and basis of their struggle. Even though polls in the black community consistently record less than 15 percent support for the Brawley advisers, it is a potent minority, capable of cowing more moderate blacks, particularly in the face of white anger.

It is also capable of profoundly miseducating a larger portion of the black community. Its tactics reinforce what Shelby Steele has identified as the perverse sort of organizing that "binds the victim to his victimization by linking his power to his status as a victim. . . . One sees evidence of this in the near happiness with which certain black leaders recount the horror of Howard Beach and other recent instances of racial tension. As one is saddened by these tragic events, one is also repelled at the way some black leaders—agitated to near hysteria by the scent of victim power inherent in them—leap forward to exploit them as evidence of black innocence and white guilt." And in the tortured labyrinths of these men's minds, that legacy of victimization and impotence somehow translates into psychosexual cruelty as well.

One can scarcely overestimate how painful it would be for an already beleaguered community to face and discuss these awful truths. Has white society done much better with its own misogyny? Still, it's astonishing that apparently more moderate black leaders such as Bill Perkins, tenant leader of the defendants' Schomburg Plaza Housing complex, and the Rev. Calvin Butts of Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church don't feel compelled to correct what they read in the black press and hear in Maddox's and Sharpton's diatribes. Asked if there was a lesson to be learned from the verdict in the Central Park case, Perkins said it was that black youths can be railroaded by the system. Butts, in his sermon the day after the verdict was rendered, challenged his congregation to "be like Jesus" and show forgiveness toward the defendants—adding, paradoxically, that he doubted the verdicts' validity.

That might have made sense had Butts ever challenged his congregants to "be like Jesus" toward the white murderers and assailants in Bensonhurst and Howard Beach—or had he challenged Sharpton's and the black press's cruel, delusionary antics. Instead, he, like Perkins and many other black clerical and civic leaders, help by silent assent to wrap the mantle of victimization around young defendants.

Could stronger leadership make a difference? Several courageous black leaders, such as Brooklyn Assemblyman Roger Green and East Brooklyn Congregations chairman Rev. Johnny Ray Young Blood, have tried. So has David Dinkins. When the assault on the jogger occurred in April 1989, Dinkins, then Manhattan borough president, summoned black leaders to a meeting in his office. When Perkins objected to Dinkins's reference to the perpetrators of the assault as "urban terrorists," Dinkins sternly replied, "I called them that, Bill, because that's what they were." The silence in the room conveyed wary acknowledgment that Dinkins was right. Yet the participants' refusal to reinforce that truth publicly can only be seen as a contribution to the deepening undertows of normlessness and violence gripping low-income black communities.

The criminal justice system has not been perfect in these cases. Disturbing questions about the quality of investigations, evidence, and judges' instructions haunt the Bensonhurst and Central Park trials. They may provide grounds for appeal. But that is a job for defense attorneys who aren't doubling as political leaders. The difference between personal responsibility and public posturing was clarified by Sheryl McCarthy, a black columnist for *New York Newsday*: "After the crimes [against the jogger] were committed, there was only denial—by the teens, their parents, and their supporters—who saw racism in the mere fact that the jogger was white and that black teenagers were charged with the crime. . . . Because of all the denial and the frenzy into which the community was whipped up by the trial, I suspect the teens view themselves as the wronged ones. Though there is a young woman with a scarred face and body, . . . these young men see themselves as the victims. But there must be times in the middle of the night when Anton, Yusef, and Raymond are awakened by sudden flashes of the truth, when they realize the true horror of what they did."

The question is whether the truth can awaken more black leaders as well.

JIM SLEEPER, an editorial writer for *New York Newsday*, is the author of *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York*, which will be published by W. W. Norton this week.

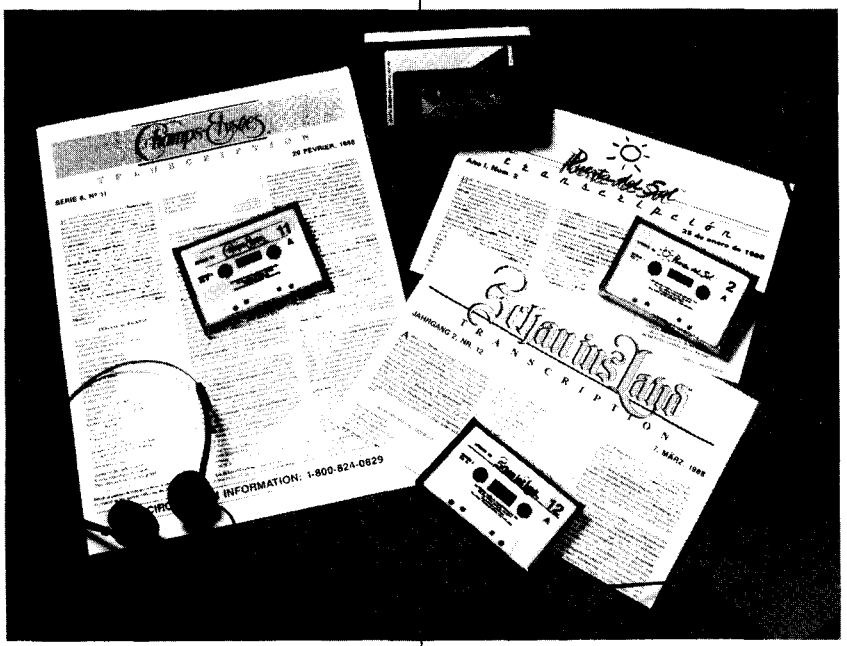
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jacques Chirac, Lothar de Maizière, and Felipe González would like to have a word with you.

In French. In German. And in Spanish.

Now that you know the basics of a foreign language, join the thousands of business leaders, educators, professionals, and diplomats who are improving their language fluency and having fun with *Champs-Elysées®*, *Schau ins Land®*, and *Puerta del Sol®*.

In lively monthly editions, you'll meet famous chefs, fashion designers, Nobel laureates, actors and entertainers, even heads of state and royalty. You'll join in the fun at traditional festivals and celebrations, visit interesting towns and out-of-the-way places, and get a European perspective on the news.



You'll even hear some of today's best European music—pop, jazz, and old favorites.

Each 60-minute edition comes on an audio-cassette, accompanied by a word-for-word transcription of all the spoken segments and song lyrics. To help you learn as you listen, difficult words and phrases are highlighted in bold in the text and explained in a vocabulary section prepared by expert linguists.

Listen at home, while jogging, or on the way to work. You'll be amazed how quickly your language skills improve.

Champs-Elysées® FRANCE

La France en cassettes!

Whether it's monitoring the changing fortunes of France's political factions or counting calories with pastry chef Gaston Lenôtre, top-rated French radio and television personality Georges Lang serves up programs that are upbeat and endlessly fascinating.

—I've subscribed as a means of brushing up on my French prior to travel, and I've found Champs-Elysées *to be absolutely invaluable—I only wish I'd had something like this while I was in school!*

A.M., Reno, Nevada

GERMANY Schau ins Land®

Deutsch aktuell aus erster Hand!

From the freedom trains and dismantling of the Wall to updates on the progress toward German reunification, Axel Fitzke and his team of correspondents provide continuing, first-hand accounts of the events shaping German-speaking Europe.

—[Schau ins Land] *is proving to be the perfect way to maintain and improve my German skills. The way you choose different contributors is excellent. Some of the dialect is really challenging but that's great.*

R.L., Evergreen, Colorado

Puerta del Sol® SPAIN

Su puerta al mundo hispánico.

Host Iñaki Gabilondo is undoubtedly Spain's most popular radio and television journalist. In programs that feature numerous interviews with policymakers and trendsetters, he explores the rich traditions and new directions in Spain and Latin America.

—I expected [Puerta del Sol] *to be good; it is far better than I had hoped. Your materials, both tape-recorded and written, are a magnificent accomplishment... They combine entertainment with instruction on a world-class level of quality. Iñaki Gabilondo is the epitome of perfect pronunciation and style.*

K.P., Albuquerque, New Mexico

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

Subscribe now and receive 11 monthly editions, including the combined June–July issue, for just $118. Or, try 5 editions for $69. If you're not completely satisfied with your first program, call for a full refund.

Send check or money order to Champs-Elysées, Inc.
Dept. NR11 • Box 158067 • Nashville, TN 37215
PLEASE RUSH ME MY FIRST EDITION OF

☐ *Champs-Elysées* (French) ☐ *Puerta del Sol* (Spanish)
☐ *Schau ins Land* (German)

☐ 5 editions ($69) ☐ 11 editions ($118)
☐ Study supplement ($20) ☐ Study supplement ($44)

Tennessee residents add 7.75% sales tax

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Ask about our new Italian program!

FOR FASTER SERVICE, ORDER BY CREDIT CARD
1-800-824-0829
(VISA AND MASTERCARD ACCEPTED)

© Champs-Elysées, Inc. • 2000 Glen Echo Road, Suite 205 • Nashville, TN 37215

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another fine Meese mess.

COMPUTER TROUBLE

By Jacob Weisberg

Ursula Meese used to say that if her husband, Ed, were a woman, he would have gotten pregnant a hundred times. In a new book about the Wedtech scandal, *Too Good To Be True*, James Traub recounts the many instances of the attorney general's inability to say no to his corrupt chum E. Bob Wallach, which ultimately brought about his own downfall. A strikingly similar, and largely untold, story in which Wallach's name also figures is that of a small Washington-based computer software firm called INSLAW, whose owners contend they were ruined by cronies trying to capitalize on their relationships with Meese.

Despite substantial evidence of a conspiracy by officials inside the Justice Department—including, perhaps, Meese himself—to defraud the company, and despite evidence of a cover-up and of perjury by officials who worked under him, the Justice Department has yet to take seriously the charges of corruption stemming from the scandal. Until it does, the cloud Meese carried with him will continue to hang over the department.

The dauntingly complex story of INSLAW begins in March 1982, when the company's owners, Bill and Nancy Hamilton, signed a three-year, $10 million contract to equip the Justice Department with a case-management computer program called PROMIS. The software, which was developed by Bill Hamilton, enables the offices of U.S. attorneys to keep track of information on cases, witnesses, and defendants, and to manage their caseloads more effectively. Problems with the contract arose almost immediately. In essence, the Justice Department accused INSLAW of overbilling and began to withhold payment. Hamilton claimed the allegations were phony. In February 1984 Justice terminated part of the contract, which constituted the bulk of INSLAW's business, forcing the company into bankruptcy.

Hamilton had no idea why the deal had gone sour until he learned that a former employee, C. Madison "Brick" Brewer, whom he had fired several years earlier, had been put in charge of his contract at Justice. He protested Brewer's conflict of interest, but the bigger problem, he soon discovered, was that Deputy Attorney General D. Lowell Jensen had overall supervisory responsibility for the procurement. Jensen didn't much like INSLAW, or PROMIS. When he was district attorney in Alameda County, California, he had developed his own case-tracking software system, which he thought was superior. Jensen also took a special interest in the project because of his responsibility for Project Eagle, a $212 million plan to provide automated case management for the entire Justice Department.

When the contract troubles proved intractable, Hamilton contacted former Attorney General Elliot Richardson, who had served as an adviser to his company when it was still in California in the 1970s. In December 1985 Richardson and Hamilton went to the Justice Department to meet with Jensen and attempt to straighten out the disagreement. Richardson was surprised by the adamance of Jensen's opposition to PROMIS and became convinced that INSLAW was the victim of a private vendetta. He advised Bill and Nancy Hamilton, who were already in bankruptcy court, to sue the Justice Department for stealing their software, since it was already in use in dozens of U.S. attorney's offices even though it hadn't been paid for.

In the midst of their case, the Hamiltons met Anthony Pasciuto. Pasciuto, who was deputy director of the Executive Office for U.S. Trustees, which oversees bankruptcy estates on behalf of the courts, had a remarkable story to tell them: the Justice Department was improperly applying pressure on his office to convert INSLAW's Chapter 11 reorganization into a Chapter 7 liquidation, which would have meant that all the company's assets, including the rights for PROMIS, would be sold at auction. INSLAW's lawyers took depositions from those in the office who Pasciuto claimed knew about this scheme. One of them, U.S. Trustee Cornelius Blackshear, corroborated Pasciuto's story in full. Two days later, however, after a visit from department officials, Blackshear executed a sworn affidavit recanting his testimony. There had been no Justice Department pressure to convert INSLAW's case to a liquidation after all. Pasciuto, near tears as he was examined on the witness stand in bankruptcy court, recanted as well.

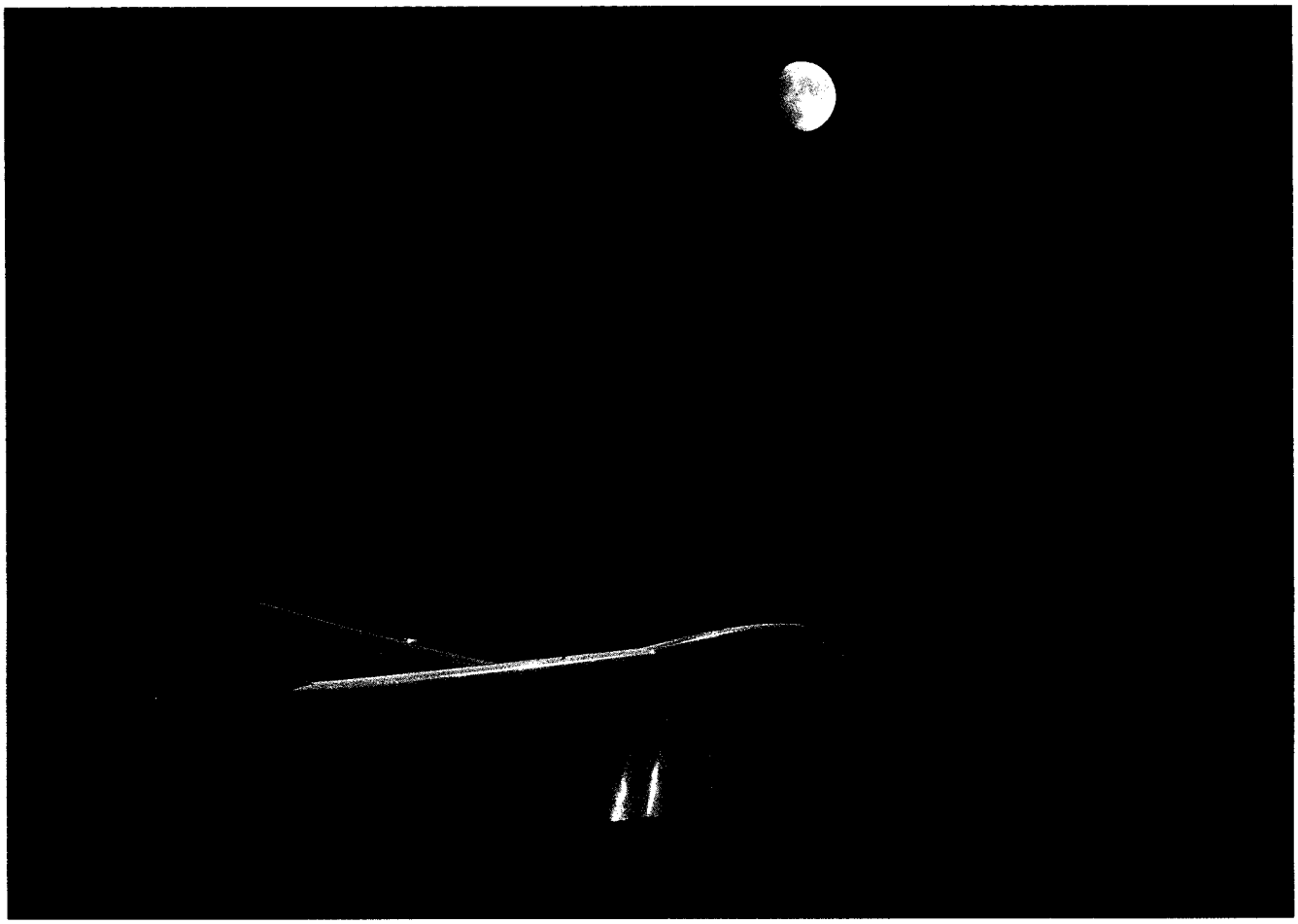
The Justice Department Office of Professional Responsibility recommended that Pasciuto be fired, noting in a memo that "but for Mr. Pasciuto's highly irresponsible actions, the Department would be in a much better litigation posture than it presently finds itself. . . ." After he was let go, Pasciuto reverted to his original version of the story: there had been pressure to turn INSLAW's bankruptcy into a liquidation.

The bankruptcy judge presiding over the case, George F. Bason Jr., believed Blackshear's and Pasciuto's original statements, and in 1987 he decided that Justice had acted illegally in trying to put INSLAW out of business. Bason sent Meese a letter recommending that he designate an appropriate outside official to review the dispute because of the prima facie evidence of perjury by Justice Department officials. Meese did nothing.

Later that year, after a two-and-a-half week trial, Bason ruled in favor of INSLAW in its suit against the Justice Department. The department "took, converted, stole" INSLAW's software "by trickery, fraud, and deceit." Bason found that Justice "engaged in an outrageous, deceitful, fraudulent game of cat and mouse, demonstrat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You don't learn to fly overseas overnight.



Overseas travel is considerably different than domestic travel. Longer flights and remote destinations require a different kind of service, one that can only be learned through experience. Lufthansa flies to 85 countries around the world – more than any other airline. We've spent over 50 years getting to know the people, customs and languages that other airlines are just beginning to explore. So no matter how far you have to travel, you can be sure we know the territory.
After all, to Lufthansa, foreign destinations are anything but foreign.

People expect the world of us.

Lufthansa

Lufthansa is a participant in the mileage programs of United, Delta, USAir and Continental/Eastern. See your Travel Agent for details.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing contempt for both the law and any principle of fair dealing." He also ordered that it pay INSLAW $8 million in compensatory damages and legal fees.

Bason's verdict was upheld on appeal by U.S. District Court Judge William B. Bryant. The Justice Department is now taking the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Three months after his decision in favor of INSLAW, Bason was denied reappointment to the bankruptcy court.

There is no evidence to suggest that Bason's failure to be reappointed was related to his decision in the INSLAW case. But a string of other coincidences soon gave the Hamiltons the idea that a larger conspiracy was at work against them. Bill Hamilton recalled that in April 1983 he had received a telephone call from Dominic Laiti of Hadron, Inc., a Fairfax, Virginia, computer services corporation. Laiti told him that he was interested in buying INSLAW in order to get its PROMIS software.

Here the plot thickens. Hadron was controlled by Dr. Earl Brian, a friend of Meese's and former member of Ronald Reagan's California gubernatorial Cabinet. At the time of the call, Ursula Meese owned $15,000 of stock in Brian's company. In his conversation with Hamilton, Laiti noted his firm's relationship with Meese, and said that he expected to receive Justice Department contracts for law enforcement software. When Hamilton said he wasn't interested in selling his business, Laiti reportedly said: "We have ways of making you sell." Laiti has said he doesn't remember calling Hamilton, and denies threatening him.

INSLAW alleges in legal documents that Brian was ultimately behind other attempts to take over the company during the same period, which was when its troubles with the Justice Department first began. Brian, Hamilton believes, hoped to buy INSLAW on the cheap and take advantage of his relationship with Meese to get lucrative computer contracts with the Justice Department, ultimately including Project Eagle, which was designed to utilize PROMIS software.

Another eerie portent was the behavior of the law firm representing the Hamiltons—Dickstein, Shapiro & Morin. Well into the case, their lawyer, Leigh Ratiner, was asked to leave the firm after ten years as a partner. Ratiner later told Senate investigators that he believed his firing was related to his aggressive posture in the INSLAW case. Attorneys at Dickstein had pressured him to delete references to Jensen, the Justice Department official opposed to PROMIS, from his original complaint because they had to "practice law with the DOJ." An interrogatory revealed that senior partner Leonard Garment had discussed the case with Meese and Deputy Attorney General Arnold Burns, who replaced Jensen after he was appointed a federal judge. After Ratiner left the firm, the case was handed to another Dickstein partner, who pressured INSLAW to seek an immediate settlement of $1 million. The Hamiltons rejected the recommendation. When attorney and client could no longer agree on how to proceed, INSLAW got a new lawyer.

The Hamiltons see a pattern in these events. A plan existed within the Justice Department, they contend, to drive them out of business in order to steer their contract, and ultimately the contract for Project Eagle, to Meese's friend Brian. This parallels the scenario of the Wedtech scandal, in which Meese's friend Wallach (a former partner at Dickstein whose six-year sentence is currently on appeal) tried to use his relationship with the attorney general to win sweetheart defense contracts. Here, as in Wedtech, there is no final proof that Meese understood the attempt to cash in on a relationship with him. But in the INSLAW scandal, unlike Wedtech, Meese and his wife actually stood to profit themselves, through the stock Ursula Meese owned in Brian's company. Meese and Jensen have both discounted all of these charges.

It's impossible to say for certain whether the Hamiltons' explanation is correct. Though there is compelling evidence that officials in the Justice Department acted wrongfully in pursuing a vendetta against INSLAW, the allegation of a high-level conspiracy remains a plausible theory in need of investigating. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, chaired by Sam Nunn, began an investigation in April 1988 and did not get anywhere near the bottom of the story. Shortly into its inquiry, according to papers filed in federal court by the Hamiltons, the Senate Judiciary Committee's chief investigator, Ronald LeGrand, received a call from an unnamed senior official at Justice, whom he had known for fifteen years and trusted completely. LeGrand said the official told him that the INSLAW case was "a lot dirtier for the Department of Justice than Watergate had been, both in its breadth and its depth." He told LeGrand that it was Jensen who had engineered INSLAW's problems from the very beginning. He also said he would come forward, as would other career officials in the Criminal Division who know about the conspiracy—but only if they were assured of protection against reprisals, and put under oath. LeGrand was never asked for his informant's name.

When Nunn's committee finished its investigation in September 1989, it published an eighty-page Senate report that concluded that although INSLAW was a victim of personal bias, there is "no proof of the existence of a broad conspiracy against INSLAW within the Department of Justice." The report offered its conclusion with the proviso, however, that the Justice Department had been uncooperative, refusing to allow witnesses to testify without representatives of the litigation division being present to "advise" them. The effect of their presence was to intimidate those who might otherwise have cooperated with the investigation. Only two of the thirty career officials the Hamiltons say know the most about the matter testified. According to the report, "The Staff learned through various channels of a number of Department employees who desired to speak to the Subcommittee, but who chose not to out of fear for their jobs." The House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Representative Jack Brooks of Texas, recently began a new investigation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When Richard Thornburgh, who was known as "Mr. Clean" for his efforts to root out government corruption as U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh in the early 1970s, was appointed attorney general, the Hamiltons hoped he would appoint an independent counsel to investigate the INSLAW matter. Short of that, they wanted a genuine internal investigation supervised by a Justice Department attorney who wasn't involved with the case. "The department has a duty—independent of us—to conduct a really thorough investigation," Richardson says.

In December 1989 the Hamiltons filed a suit that seeks to compel the attorney general to investigate. They do not stand to gain financially from this new case, but say they are pursuing it because, after seven years of litigation, they want justice done. Though they have yet to collect any portion of the $8 million awarded them by the bankruptcy court pending the Justice Department's appeal, the Hamiltons are back in business selling an updated version of PROMIS to state, municipal, and private law offices.

In its response to their new suit, the Justice Department does not answer the Hamiltons' factual allegations, but argues that their case should be dismissed on the basis of separation of powers: the judiciary branch cannot force an executive agency to undertake a criminal investigation. The Justice Department also asserts that the Public Integrity Section of its Criminal Division has looked into charges of misconduct arising out of the INSLAW matter and found them to be without merit. Thornburgh repeated this point in a letter to Brooks. The attorney general claimed that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute any current or former Justice Department employees.

When I asked Thornburgh about INSLAW at a press breakfast a few months ago, he seemed to have forgotten his stated position that the Justice Department has already investigated the matter. "Until the civil litigation is cleared up, we're not in a position to undertake an assessment of what culpability, if any, exists within the department, or the department's past or present employees," he said. This statement—that Justice hasn't yet decided whether to investigate—is closer to the truth. Thornburgh knows that there has been no real investigation within the department. Of thirty material witnesses named by the Hamiltons in their brief, only one was contacted by investigators. LeGrand still has not been asked for the name of his "dirtier than Watergate" informant.

The remaining mystery is why the attorney general doesn't care to find out what happened to the Hamiltons. After all, the INSLAW affair implicates Meese, Jensen, and others, but it cannot very well indict Thornburgh, who was in Pennsylvania when the alleged conspiracy took place. As *The Washington Post* editorialized about the case earlier this year, Thornburgh "should be leading the investigation of alleged internal wrongdoing, not stonewalling it." Mr. Clean, it seems, got left behind in Pennsylvania. •

Mexico's postrevolutionary opening.

SALINAS TAKES A GAMBLE

By Robert A. Pastor

Americans have been so transfixed by the fall of the Berlin Wall—and now riveted to the crisis in the Persian Gulf—that they have failed to notice the crumbling of the walls that have segmented Mexico and separated it from the United States. Yet Mexico's opening may be the more significant for us, in terms of infusing our economy and reshaping our society. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, challenging a long tradition of state control and anti-Americanism, is leading this change, transforming Mexico and U.S.-Mexican relations more profoundly than any Mexican president in this century.

Not yet one-third of the way through his term, he has moved decisively to arrest corrupt union bosses, financial speculators, drug traffickers, and repressive government officials, and has sold off state corporations, deregulated large sectors of the economy, lowered trade and investment barriers, and begun, grudgingly, to democratize. Yet his most daring gamble is his proposal for a free trade agreement with the United States, and he is ready to sell the idea in both countries. "In 1992," he told me, "the European Community will be the largest market in the world. The United States will be No. 2, but the U.S. and Mexico together could be No. 1." If Presi-

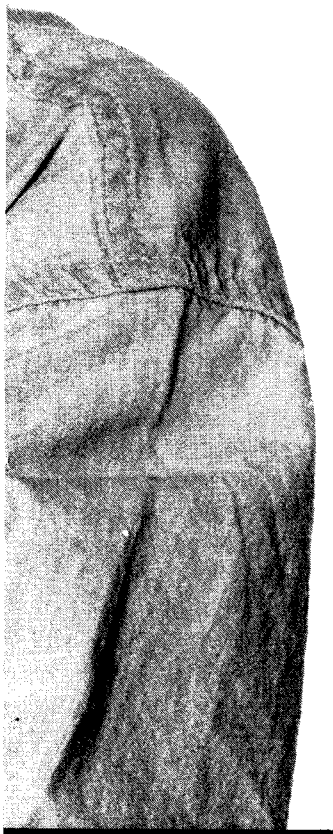
ROBERT A. PASTOR, professor of political science at Emory University, is co-author, with Jorge G. Castañeda, of *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (Vintage). He was director of Latin American affairs at the National Security Council from 1977 to 1981.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© 1990 IBM Corporation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Grown-ups tell us, 'Just say no.' That's easy for them to say."



"Maybe they forgot what it's like.

"At parties, at school, kids are saying to try this or do that, and they're my friends. I mean how many times can I hear I'm a loser.

"Sure I'm scared of drugs. It's just there's so much pressure. You want to say no. But you can take a lot of heat for it."

Simple yes-no decisions aren't so simple when they involve kids and drugs.

That's why IBM has helped develop a computer-based, interactive video program that's now in schools. It simulates realistic social situations, and allows kids to make choices—about drugs, about alcohol, about themselves—and to experience the consequences, but without getting hurt.

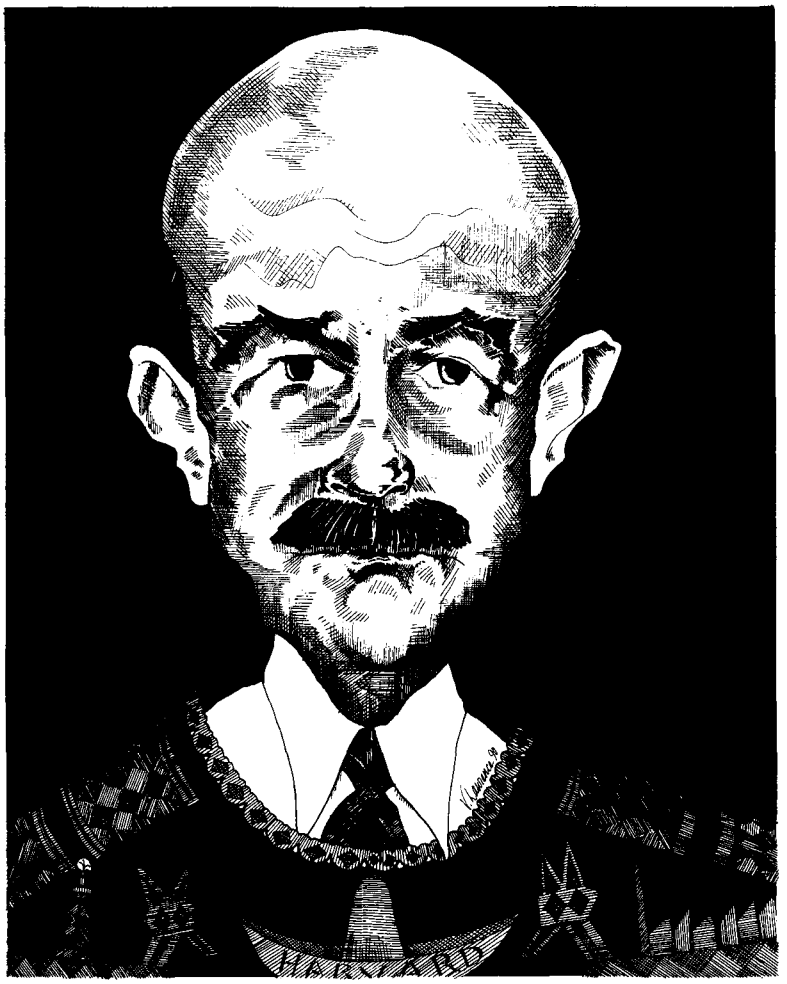
The program is sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and preliminary results have been extremely encouraging. To learn more about this program, write to us at IBM, P.O. Box 3974, Dept. 973, Peoria, IL 61614.

IBM®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dent Bush fails to grasp the proposal, or if Mexico's economy does not improve or its political climate deteriorates—all real possibilities—Salinas's idea could become a historical footnote, and we might have to wait another generation for the next opportunity.

The twentieth century's first revolution was in Mexico, and it was cataclysmic. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which eventually consolidated power, built a centralized state in which high tariff walls permitted miraculous growth and undemocratic political walls kept politics stable. But by the 1970s the Mexican revolution had grown decadent, becoming, in Carlos Fuentes's words, "a fat lady who drives a Mercedes Benz." In the '80s, the debt crisis led to a decline in average wages by 40 percent, and inflation soared. By the 1988 election a political breach had opened in the previously impregnable PRI. One of its leaders, Cuahtemoc Cardenas, the son of the Mexican president who had nationalized the oil industry, left the party and challenged Salinas for the presidency and for the PRI's soul and legacy. Salinas was elected by a bare majority, though Cardenas charged fraud and refuses to accept defeat.



SALINAS BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Like Mikhail Gorbachev, Salinas has not launched a second revolution or returned to the first: he is a postrevolutionary pragmatist. But unlike Gorbachev, Salinas opened the economy first, and he has been hesitant in opening the political system. This strategy might work better than Gorbachev's, whose economic reforms are now stuck because he cannot muster the necessary political support from his demoralized party and divided country. Salinas would probably prefer to postpone free elections until the economic reforms restart the economy, raise wages, and bring people back to the PRI. The pivotal questions are whether the economic reforms will work, and whether democracy will wait.

Salinas's first economic priority was to reduce his country's external debt. He assembled a first-rate economic team, and Mexico was the first to negotiate debt relief under Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady's plan. External debt was reduced 20 percent, about $20 billion, which will result in savings of about $4 billion in debt service each year from 1990 to 1994. Mexico had hoped to reduce its debt much more, but this was sufficient to release some funds for investment.

The government then raised revenues 13.4 percent by enforcing the tax laws for the first time in Mexican history, and cut expenditures. The fiscal deficit shrunk from 11.7 percent of GDP in 1988 to 5.8 percent last year, and inflation plummeted from 160 percent in 1987 to 19.7 percent in 1989. Seventy percent of the state's corporations were privatized, and deregulation permitted businesses to respond to the market rather than to bureaucrats. Trade barriers were lowered so sharply that Mexico went from being one of the most protected markets in the world to a relatively open one. Manufacturing exports surged. Salinas also confronted the untouchables—privatizing the banks and revising the rules on foreign investment—and received surprisingly little criticism for it.

One year ago there was almost no confidence in the economy; today confidence is returning. In 1989 the rate of economic growth was 2.9 percent, the first real improvement since the onset of the debt crisis. The labor market is tighter than it has been in a decade, and capital, after moving north for years, has begun to return to Mexico. The stock market index doubled in the last year, a better performance than any other market in the world. In July *Forbes* magazine told American businessmen to "forget Eastern Europe. The next great economic miracle will take place right on our borders." Mexico, it declared, had become "a revolution you can invest in."

Yet though expectations have improved, investment has not increased sufficiently to generate significant growth. Employment in manufacturing has grown, but not as fast as the labor force. Exports have expanded, but so have imports, and the peso may be overvalued. Agricultural production continues its descent while

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

overall prices are starting to climb again. The oil price increase will help, but Mexico's new pragmatists are downplaying that as a panacea; they will not repeat their predecessors' oil-boom-and-bust mistake.

Paradoxically, the success of the economic changes may also depend on Cardenas. He stands astride a heterogeneous, leftist popular movement that he is trying, with limited success, to transform into a new Party of Democratic Revolution (PRD). He has criticized Salinas for "indiscriminately" lowering the economic walls and for not taking into account the social, political, and national security effects of those decisions. But he says if he becomes president, he would review the program on a "pragmatic" basis, not reverse it. Some businessmen believe Cardenas would return to the old state-led model, and there are many in the PRD who would like to do that. If the economy does not grow, their voices could prevail. Other businessmen, like Juan Elek, the former head of the Mexican-U.S. Private Sector Committee, believe Cardenas would modify—not reverse—current policy, but they also think Cardenas's popularity has already waned. The greatest threat, however, may come from Cardenas's followers, who could resort to violence if they feel their leader's path to power is blocked.

By leaving the PRI Cardenas turned a private internal discussion into a public debate, making opposition legitimate and democracy possible. Mexicans have stopped keeping secrets from themselves, and even from Americans. Yet there are still numerous obstacles in Mexico's path to democracy, the most important of which are the PRI's total control of the state and the reluctance by many in the PRI to risk their power for the uncertain results of a secret ballot. Salinas has promised to open the PRI's financial books to the opposition, but "the problem," complained Lucas de la Garza, a PRD leader who left the PRI, "is that you would have to audit the entire government budget to find all the funds that flow to the PRI."

The conservative National Action Party (PAN) has long complained of rigged elections, and when the PRI offered to negotiate a new electoral law with them, they leaped at the opportunity. The new law responds to most of PAN's concerns on registration, campaign finance, faster and more transparent counting and announcement of results, and a more balanced electoral commission. However, the PRD and one-third of PAN voted against the bill in the Chamber of Deputies because the electoral council is not independent of the government, and the PRI retains a majority of seats. Although an improvement on the past, the law does not go far enough to assure the opposition a fair shake.

Salinas's electoral record is better than his predecessors', though it is still uneven. In July 1989, for the first time since the revolution, an opposition party won a governorship—the PAN in Baja California. At the same time, the PRI stole elections from the PRD in Cardenas's home state of Michoacan. When his supporters seized the municipal palace, Cardenas called for restraint, and the army evacuated the buildings without a single death. Six months later Cardenas's party won municipal elections in Michoacan, but the PRI was accused of stealing an election in Iraupan from the PAN.

Local PRI officials are reluctant to lose power. Salinas would prefer to open the system gradually, but in the short term he will discipline his cadre only when the opposition leaves little choice. The PAN did that by covering Baja with its poll-watchers, and the PRD's reaction in July 1989 encouraged the PRI to accept its loss six months later.

On November 11 there will be local elections in 121 municipalities in the state of Mexico. The PRI did poorly in the state in 1988, and some recent polls suggest it could lose all of the twenty-five key towns, where 80 percent of the 12 million voters live. This would be difficult for the PRI to accept, but if these elections are rigged, the potential for violence in the state is quite real. And these are just a prelude for the August 1991 midterm elections for the Chamber of Deputies, one-half of the Senate, and seven governors, which will be the main test of Salinas's pledge to democratize the country. Unfortunately, he is in the awkward position of being credible only if the PRI loses.

One way to break out of this no-win situation would be to invite international observers. The Foreign Ministry describes elections as "the ultimate sovereign act," and the idea of letting foreigners, let alone Americans, judge elections gives them—the defenders of Mexico's virtue—paroxysms. Yet Cardenas, whose movement pretends to a higher nationalism than the PRI, has already broken Mexican tradition by criticizing his government in the United States, and told me he is prepared to invite international observers. If the next two elections are debacles, and the news media exaggerate the opposition's charges, then the PRI might begin to view observers as an escape from this predicament.

The most intrepid gamble of Salinas's presidency, and the one that has probably alienated some members of his party, has been to expand the boundaries of cooperation with the United States. "In the old days," Jesus Silva-Herzog, a minister of finance in the previous government, explained, "we PRIstas were taught that Uncle Sam and foreign investment were the problem. Now we are being told that they are the solutions."

Despite serious strains, particularly in the area of drug trafficking, the U.S.-Mexican relationship is as good as it has been for a very long time. The adeptness of U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte is one of the reasons, though he diplomatically offers three others: "excellent personal and substantive chemistry between Bush and Salinas; a good institutional relationship that includes regular meetings between numerous members of each Cabinet with their counterparts; and the growing importance of trade between the two countries."

Mexico is a more important trading partner for the United States than Germany, England, or France; it has been No. 3 behind Canada and Japan for most of the decade. It therefore seemed logical to formalize this relationship with a free-trade agreement, and Ameri-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cans have regularly offered such proposals, undeterred by Mexico's lack of interest. A year ago Salinas dismissed this idea, saying that the unevenness of the two economies made it unrealistic. He says two developments led him to propose such an agreement in his meeting with Bush in Washington on June 10. "First, we opened the economy to reduce inflation." Now Mexico wants to secure access to the U.S. market. "Secondly, the changes in Europe and East Asia and an apparent reliance on blocs convinced me that we should also try to be part of an economic trading bloc with the United States and Canada. But," he insisted, "we do not want this bloc to be a fortress. We want it to strengthen our ability to be part of Asia, Europe, and especially Latin America."

Salinas needed new investments to move his economy, but he found Western Europe preoccupied by the East and Japan hesitant. The traditional Mexican strategy was to try to gain U.S. attention by feinting toward other regions, but Salinas reversed that. After proposing a trade agreement with Washington, he traveled to Japan, where he converted Japan's interest in a guaranteed U.S. market into $2 billion worth of commitments for new investments—equivalent to current Japanese investment in Mexico. Some Mexicans have raised questions about the details of the proposed agreement or about the style of the approach. Silva-Herzog quipped that "Mexico should have waited to be caressed first, before dropping its pants." But there was no serious criticism about whether to negotiate, and Mexican public opinion, for the moment, is in favor.

In Washington, Salinas encountered a cautious George Bush. In an ironic role reversal, Salinas proposed immediate negotiations, and Bush offered informal talks, with negotiations only after the completion in December of the GATT trade negotiations. The United States has a choice on how to negotiate this agreement. The special trade representative can deal with it in a routine way, squeezing the Mexicans point by point. As Mexico has a tradition of converting small problems with the United States into contests over sovereignty, this approach risks losing the whole enchilada. Or Bush can recognize that such an agreement is one of the nation's highest foreign policy priorities, requiring a long-term vision and a genuine bipartisan approach. As domestic opposition is likely to come from Democrats and labor, he should appoint a Democrat like Robert Strauss, Sol Linowitz, or Bruce Babbitt as the negotiator to report to him and to remain sensitive to the political ramifications in Mexico.

The first step is for both sides to remove the two most sensitive issues, oil and migration, from the agenda. Second, both should agree to phase in the reductions in trade barriers more gradually and less completely in Mexico than in the United States. Third, U.S. negotiators should concentrate on the largest issue—an agreement—and concede the smaller ones to permit Salinas to build a durable coalition in Mexico in favor of the agreement. Finally, borrowing the dispute-settlement mechanism and other elements of the Canadian agreement, negotiators should aim to complete the agreement in one year. If it takes longer, Mexicans could have second thoughts, and Americans could be distracted by possible political turmoil in Mexico.

The United States could ruin the agreement if it conditioned it on changes in the Mexican political system. The United States has a stake in those changes and should state clearly its preference for democracy over "stability" (a false choice anyway since Mexico will not be stable without democracy). But democracy is more likely to arrive in Mexico if the United States completes the agreement fast than if it conditions acceptance of an agreement on those changes, or worse, if it tried to interfere in Mexico's politics.

Bush also needs to demonstrate U.S. respect for Mexico's sovereignty. The involvement by the Drug Enforcement Administration in the kidnapping of a Mexican doctor, who was allegedly involved in the murder of a DEA agent, was illegal and wrong. While we broke the rules, the Mexicans followed them, requesting the arrest of two DEA agents who admitted in court their role in the kidnapping. The administration seems inclined to dismiss the case, but if we do that, we cannot expect Mexico to respond to our requests for cooperation or extradition.

The regional, hemispheric, and geopolitical implications of Salinas's proposal also argue for an immediate, positive response by the United States. North America has resources, energy, complementary labor skills, and a market of 350 million people. This is a formidable economic base. The fear of being locked out of a North American economic community is already beginning to generate interest in the rest of Latin America in a hemispheric-wide union. That interest was reinforced by Bush's speech on June 27 offering free-trade agreements to Latin America and by the fact that the most nationalistic country in the hemisphere, Mexico, has now proposed to tie its economic fate to the United States.

As Salinas suggested, neither a North American nor a Western Hemisphere community should be a fortress, but rather a platform for building a competitive edge. All of this starts in Mexico: if Mexico does not succeed in modernizing its economy and democratizing its politics, the United States cannot escape the consequences. Instability in Mexico would cause massive migration, capital flight, and radicalism. U.S. citizens and border states would be harmed. "U.S. unions," Salinas says, "will lose more jobs if Mexicans don't find them in Mexico." And the president will be pressured to solve Mexico's problems, though it will then be too late.

It is not too late now. Given Mexico's ultra-sensitivity, the United States is rarely invited to help Mexico develop. Salinas has taken a historic risk in proposing a way to do that while benefiting both countries. This is the time to reward a Mexican risk. President Bush has a momentous chance to reshape our most important and difficult relationship; he should not dawdle. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Has Capitalism Won?

In America income and wealth have been shamelessly redistributed from the bottom to the top, homelessness is rampant, drugs have even invaded our elementary schools — and that's just for starters — and yet our pontificating pundits have the chutzpah to declare, "We Won!"

But the archetypal pontificator in Rome — specifically, the one who's been a key player in Communism's collapse — dissents from this capitalist bombast. It's superficial, says the Pontiff, to interpret Bolshevism's bust-up as the triumph of capitalism or to see capitalism as the only remaining option. He says capitalism "makes people slaves of 'possession' " and promotes a grossly unequal distribution of goods — the alternative being a society where money and capital don't reign and where workers participate in the ownership and management of enterprises. The Pope a progressive? Don't be shocked! *National Review* has derided John Paul as "the last socialist."

You see, as secular reformers lose hope during these greedy times, religious people, with their transcendental commitments, are keeping the cause of social justice alive. *The Progressive* sees Christians and religious Jews as "the fastest growing" element of the Left. Not surprisingly, we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an ecumenical monthly edited by lay Catholics, are energetically contending for humane social change and ecological sensitivity (according to *Utne Reader*, we "battle all the major assumptions of our consumer-crazed, growth-oriented society"). But we do so in our own unique "voice" — we're not captive to tired, predictable ideologies. The University of Chicago's Martin E. Marty, a Lutheran, says we "probe and nudge and jab in the hope of inducing fresh thought." Those who do the probing include such original thinkers as Christopher Lasch, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Robert N. Bellah, Eileen Egan, and Robert Coles.

If you're impatient with conventional wisdom, if you crave luminous ideas, subscribe today!

(Please allow 2 to 8 weeks for delivery of first issue)

SPECIAL DISCOUNT RATES FOR FIRST-TIME SUBSCRIBERS

- ☐ One-year subscription. . . . . .$14 (regularly $19)
- ☐ One-year student, unemployed, or retired person's subscription . . . . . .$12 (regularly $16)
- ☐ Two-year subscription . . . . .$23 (regularly $35)
- ☐ One-year Canadian or foreign subscription . . . . US$17 (regularly $22) Payment must be drawn in US Dollars
- ☐ Sample copy. $3.50

NAME (Please print or type)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Send coupon or letter. Make check payable to NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Mail to:

NEW OXFORD REVIEW
Room 584
1069 Kains Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94706

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Mysteries

It's sixteen years since *Chinatown*, and about half that time has been spent preparing a sequel. After one false start and a lot of fussing, the sequel arrives. It stars—again—Jack Nicholson, was directed by him (Roman Polanski directed the first), and was written—again—by Robert Towne, though Nicholson claims some credit for script touches. The odds against a sequel equaling its sire are always heavy; and **The Two Jakes** (Paramount) proves the rule the wrong way, by not being an exception.

Chinatown, which was set in Los Angeles in 1937, stands up quite well. Its flaws are all in the script, and they are still flaws: it's burdened with a few unnecessary sequences, and Chinatown itself is arbitrarily dragged in as a Manichaean symbol. But the virtues are now even stronger—Polanski's direction, John A. Alonzo's lighting, Faye Dunaway's performance, John Huston's mere presence, and Nicholson's effortlessly cunning performance. *Chinatown* works the double magic: it grips us moment by moment (almost); and as it grips, it builds, as texture, as habitation.

The Two Jakes was meant to do the same double work, but it doesn't happen. Where *Chinatown* falters a bit now and then in narrative drive, the new one never really takes off. Towne's new script is filled more with explanation than excitement. The first film used the LA water supply as the basic ground for the plot's mystery; the new one tries to do the same thing with oil. But the substitution is weak, like Richard Farnsworth's replacement of Huston as modern Mephistopheles. (Not Farnsworth's fault entirely: his role is skimpier and less interwoven with the action.) Moment by moment and overall, *The Two Jakes* is feebler than the first film.

It's now 1948. J. J. (Jake) Gittes is prospering at his trade of marital spying. This time he is employed by another man called Jake, who suspects his wife of hanky-panky. With good reason, as we soon find out. With even better reason, as we find out later. The story has some links with *Chinatown*, and there are some overt references. (Will they be understood by those who don't know the first film?) As it goes along, especially with the voice-overs by Nicholson as Gittes, the picture strives for quiet, Hammett-Cain bitterness. But it's all strain.

Nicholson is a wonderful film actor, and our faith in his talent and intelligence helps to carry the film over its lapses. Without him, *The Two Jakes* would disintegrate. No one else in the cast, all of them adequate enough, contributes anything comparable. Some of the actors from the first film are in the second, playing their characters eleven years older. (This includes Allan Warnick, who played a snippy young librarian in the first picture and is now an official whose jaw has been wired after a beating.) It's a nice familial touch, but it's wasted.

One important character is carried over from *Chinatown* under another name. Because of various references, we know fairly quickly who she really is. Jake doesn't. Why are we smarter about her than he is? And him a private eye.

Nicholson, who has directed before but not lately, has done moderately well in that job, with lighting from Vilmos Zsigmond that is somewhat fruitier than Alonzo's. Too often Nicholson starts a sequence with a close-up of an object, then pulls back from it, and in the last sequence, he uses a camera swoop that intrudes mechanically, but he sustains pace, he finds variety.

What *The Two Jakes* does most vividly is to underscore how films have changed since 1974. Language is of course more salty than it was then, and sex is more explicit. But the most notable change is in the amount of physical action. Certainly there were fights and beatings in the earlier film, as there were in films generally. Even in *Chinatown* the flurries of action vex the realism: fights that would have incapacitated a real Jake are simply ingested en route. But in *The Two Jakes* the action threshold is higher, the unbelievability greater—perilously near the *Die Hard* level. (One LA detective is carried through the film for no other reason than eventually to have a fight with Nicholson.) This sort of thing was a shrug-off nuisance in the first film, but it's sheer fantasy now that Nicholson is fifty-three and fattish.

At the advance screening of **Presumed Innocent** (Warners Bros.), the distributor handed out a sheet asking the press not to reveal the ending. This for a film made from the Scott Turow novel that had already been read by millions.

I was not one of them; I encountered the plot for the first time in the film. I won't reveal that ending, but those who

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Ariel. *Introduces a gifted Finnish director, Aki Kaurismäki, with a really black comedy about a young drifter in Helsinki. It's especially for those who like Jim Jarmusch. (Reviewed 8/20&27/90)* **Pretty Woman.** *Pygmalion up to date—this time an LA hooker and a visiting tycoon. Julia Roberts and Richard Gere make this piffle brightly entertaining. (4/16/90)* **Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!** *Not Pedro Almodóvar's most outrageous, but this tale of a Madrid porno star and her loving abductor sizzles amusingly. (5/14/90)* **Without *You* I'm Nothing.** *Sandra Bernhard's club act has been made into a film, not just a filmed act. It's full of other surprises, too, intelligent, witty, sharp. (7/2/90)* **—SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

know it or discover it here may agree that it's a classic example of a nonsensical mystery ending. Twist for its own sake. That twist could just as easily have been twisted to involve another character in the story—any one of several.

The labored surprise is made even sillier by the fact that the murderer, after troubling to concoct a complex plan for the crime and executing it very carefully, returns the murder instrument to its place without washing it off.

This balderdash makes a mockery of all the legal buzz-buzz that precedes it. If the precise courtroom stuff was only building to this nonsense, what's the point of it? Besides, the murder plot is freighted with a subplot about bribery that is only a drag on the main story. Also there's a fairly explicit sex scene that, like so many such, is included only for sales. All we really need to know is that the couple had sex.

However, Alan Pakula directed neatly, vigorously. Brian Dennehy, as the chief prosecutor, pushes his big chest through the part like a fullback who can act. Greta Scacchi gives the role of a sex menace exactly what it requires. Sab Shimono, as the medical examiner, snips out his character with quick, keen scissor strokes. Raul Julia, as the Argentinean-Jewish defense lawyer—formerly Argentinean; presumably still Jewish—spreads on more of his familiar aplomb.

There's trouble with Harrison Ford, in the leading role of a prosecutor accused of murder. In most of his films to date, Ford has had to hustle along, being eager or taciturn or scared or determined. Sometimes he was thoughtful. He did all this well enough. But at a few points in this picture, he is supposed to find emotional depths, and he is just not able to deliver. He's a pleasant man, and watching him struggle is a mite embarrassing. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Lighten Up, America

A recent article in *The Economist*, a British magazine that admits to being "unashamedly Americanophile," looks with deepening concern on what the anonymous author calls our "decadent puritanism." This condition is manifested in a number of ways, from America's weakness for euphemism (where the handicapped must now be called "differently abled") to the killjoy national attitude regarding alcohol, diet, smoking, and health. But the author's major argument revolves around the subject of race. "There are few countries on earth," he writes, "in which people are generally less prejudiced about color than America. Yet there are few countries where the issue looms so large; where pressure groups are so quick to take offense at a careless remark, or where words are made to carry such a weight of meaning." Noting how easily American political careers can collapse because of a single reference that does not pass "some ideological litmus test," the author writes that we are being terrorized by "a conformist tyranny of the majority, an intolerance of any eccentricity," in a culture that would "rather bore than shock," and concludes by urging us Americans "to lighten up a bit."

The Economist is correct in diagnosing the new sensitivity as a failure of humor. We live in a grim, censorious time. Consider the public humiliation of Andy Rooney and Jimmy Breslin, two wags who made careless remarks about gays and blacks (Rooney), Asians and women (Breslin); or consider the precipitous collapse of H. L. Mencken's reputation as a result of a few sour notes in his diary about Jews. (The thing to remember about Mencken is that, like his misogynist comic cousin W. C. Fields, he hated everyone equally—with the possible exception of Fundamentalists.) *The Economist* sees the genesis of our oversensitivity to insult in the "warped idea" that the problem with America's underclass "is a lack of self-esteem," when it is more likely the absence of "self-discipline." But the condition is hardly limited to the underclass. Today, virtually every race, religion, and ethnic group has some watchdog agency or anti-defamation league devoted to reducing the capacity for free expression and to closing off the avenues of choice.

This pathology is common to all sides of the political spectrum—exacerbated (and sometimes generated) by the very print and broadcast media that should be guarding freedom of choice and expression. And it suggests why certain forms of American humor have now become so scabrous, extreme, and underground. How, for example, could conventional comedy do justice to Actors' Equity's banning Jonathan Pryce from playing a half-Asian character in the musical *Miss Saigon* because he had the misfortune to be a white actor born in Great Britain? Equity claimed this was a "moral decision," a response to complaints by the playwright David Henry Hwang and the actor B. D. Wong (both associated with *M. Butterfly*) that Asian actors, like other minorities, had insufficient employment opportunities in the theater.

It must have taken a certain courage for Equity to adopt such a pea-brained posture in the face of inevitable ridicule, not to mention the loss of thirty-four jobs for Asian actors when the irate producer canceled the Broadway production. (Responding to widespread outrage and economic practicalities, Equity has reversed its position.) Nevertheless, the flap exposed Equity's concept of "non-traditional casting"—an excellent idea in theory—as a disguised form of reverse racism, selectively colorblind only when considering the casting of Caucasian roles.

Unlike Equity's other protectionist policies, such as preventing foreign actors from performing in Broadway plays unless they are "stars" (in the non-profit theater, even foreign "stars" are blocked from acting unless they have a green card), this decision was based on decent, unselfish sentiments. Actors are generally good-hearted, generous people, especially when their interests are not at stake, and the American theater has been a leader in integration. Still, the capacity of any organized group to determine artistic choices is unacceptable for whatever reason. Equity's reasoning would have retroactively blocked some of the greatest performances of our time (Olivier's Othello, Mirella Freni's Butterfly) as well as some of the most colorful (Peter Lorre's Mr. Moto, Warner Oland's Charlie Chan, Marlon Brando's Zapata) for the sake of placating minority groups. Even Equity's president, Colleen Dewhurst, would have had to cede her role in *The Good Woman of Setzuan* to an Asian actress—though Brecht's Shen Te is less Chinese than Bavarian.

Brecht himself made a bizarre early contribution to non-traditional casting when he suggested that the black actor Canada Lee play the part of Bosola (in his adaptation of *The Duchess of Malfi*) in white face. Today some would consider that racist, an inverted form of minstrel show. It is certainly unnecessary. We have learned that audiences have the capacity to suspend disbelief regarding the color—and even the sex—of actors playing roles for which they are not ideally cast. It is an irony that while actors rightly hate typecasting, their union is insist-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Presidents' Words

DEEDS DONE IN WORDS

Presidential Rhetoric and the Genres of Governance

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and **Kathleen Hall Jamieson**

In this first comparative study of the speeches of presidents – from Washington to Reagan – the authors demonstrate how poor rhetoric erodes the institution of the presidency, modest rhetoric merely maintains it, and powerful rhetoric strengthens it.

"Campbell and Jamieson vividly show how central public discourse has become to the lifeblood of the American polity." – Roderick Hart, author of *The Sound of Leadership*

$27.50 cloth

LINCOLN, DOUGLAS, AND SLAVERY

In the Crucible of Public Debate

David Zarefsky

"With public sentiment," said Lincoln, "nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed." In this enlightening book, Zarefsky discusses how Lincoln and Douglas, in these classics of American political debate, sought to sway public sentiment to their competing moral claims. He shows how they used conspiracy charges, legal disputes, and historical questions to steer away from the central issue of slavery. This lesson in the power of public argument can be applied to our current fractious moral disputes.

$34.95 cloth

University of Chicago Press

At bookstores, or call: 1-800-621-2736
In Illinois: 312-568-1550

ing that racial roles be played only by minorities. But as Pryce remarked upon suggesting that Wong's objection may have been opportunistic (Wong reputedly wanted the role for himself), "Changing our appearance is what we do as actors." Let's leave realism to the movies. The art of the theater is the art of transformation—*regardless*, rather than *because*, of racial or ethnic composition—and that is the true meaning of nontraditional casting.

Equity's prohibition regarding *Miss Saigon* represents puritanical suppression from the liberal left. An example of "decadent puritanism" from the fundamentalist right is the current assault on the National Endowment for the Arts. An independent commission in Washington—co-chaired by John Brademas and Leonard Garment—is now re-evaluating this agency, preparing a report to Congress that will recommend whether the NEA will be permitted to survive, either in its original form or with the restrictive anti-obscenity language presently enraging artists throughout the country. Among the questions posed by the commission to a number of witnesses are "whether the standard for publicly funded art should be different from the standard for privately funded art" and why the people of this country should be forced to contribute their "hard-earned tax dollars" to artistic projects they either ignore or despise.

I was one of the witnesses before the commission, and my answer to the first question was an unequivocal no. There can be only one standard for arts funding, and that is excellence, the artistic merit of the work (despite the "decadent puritan idea," recently endorsed by *The New York Times*, that "quality" is merely a buzz word for maintaining white male Eurocentric culture). As for the push to exclude the avant-garde from federal funding because it offends the majority, this would effectively create a custodial culture, dedicated to preserving the great works of the past that have outlived their initial shock value. But it is a truism that virtually all major modern art was originally a source of moral or aesthetic indignation. The first English production of Ibsen's *Ghosts*—now considered a work of great moral power—stimulated a vocabulary of critical abuse that could have formed the basis for a *Glossary of Fetid Terms* by Eric Partridge. And so it was with *Le Sacre du Printemps*, *Nude Descending a Staircase*, *Ulysses*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Huckleberry Finn*, all of Henry Miller, and countless artworks currently thought worthy of preservation through federal funding.

The commission's second question seems on the surface to be a fair one and harder to answer, though one might wonder why it is only now being raised, following the NEA's twenty-five-year success story. The question is also puzzling considering that the "hard-earned tax dollars" going to the NEA actually amount to sixty cents per person, representing an infinitesimal fraction of the national budget, and a scandalously small figure when compared with the arts subsidies provided by every civilized country in Europe (not to mention Canada). Surely we taxpayers have very little direct say in how any of our dollars are spent. How much control do we have over expenditures for the infinitely more costly Stealth bomber, the funding of the contras, the SDI program, or the multi-billion-dollar S&L bailout?

The muddle arises, as Kathleen Sullivan of Harvard Law School tells us, from confusing a constitutional with a majoritarian democracy. Not everything in this country is determined by polls and ballot boxes—by what Mencken called the "boobocracy." The Bill of Rights is specifically dedicated to protecting the rights of minorities, including artists, against the potential tyranny of the many. And a primary constitutional guarantee is the protection of free speech by those whose views seem eccentric, unpopular, radical, shocking, or dangerous to organized groups.

There are those, myself included, who believe that the current assault on the NEA is an infringement of First Amendment rights. People who disagree tell us that governments never fund their dissidents—but Aristophanes won state prizes for anti-war and anti-government plays in the midst of Athens's conflict with Sparta. We are also told that denying federal subsidy is not the same as censorship, since the artist can always seek private support or fall back on the marketplace. What is not properly understood is that censorship in this country takes an economic as well as a political form. Here the marketplace can function as repressively as any commissar of the arts.

Unless, as in the case of Karen Finley, publicity turns the defunded artist into a star, what usually flourishes in the marketplace is popular or majority culture: the television series, the rock concert, the blockbuster movie, the Broadway musical. But even popular culture would have little future without the less popular arts—as Klee and Mondrian influenced advertising, Bach influenced the Beatles, and performance art influenced *A Chorus Line*. We subsidize this art, even if we don't like or attend it, for the same reason that we contribute our tax dollars to cancer research, though most of us fortunately don't have tumors. The results, immediately visible only to the few, will eventually spread

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their benefits to the many.

The major issue remains the question of choice. Those who find the Mapplethorpe or Serrano photographs disgusting and hateful, or who don't like the way Karen Finley uses chocolate, can always see their sixty cents' worth somewhere else. But to brand these works obscene and ban them from federal funding is to deny others the option of deciding for themselves. (The same repressive national mood would deny women the choice to make decisions about their own bodies.) What was once the freest society in the civilized world is currently in danger of bowing down before the decadent puritanism of moralists and liberals alike. Mencken! Scourge of boobs! Thou shouldst be living at this hour. •

Born Again and Again

BY VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY

Against the Grain
by Boris Yeltsin
(Summit Books, 263 pp., $19.95)

Parting With Illusions
by Vladimir Pozner
(Atlantic Monthly Press, 324 pp., $19.95)

Scholars in the next century will conclude that communism was a remarkably complex phenomenon. It was, on the one hand, an obvious nightmare, quite accurately described by Orwell; but millions and millions of its contemporaries, on the other hand, were unable to resist its spell. The idea itself was as simple as it was stupid, and yet many of the best minds of its time could not find an antidote to its poison.

I will never forget the perplexity of our parents' generation at the disclosure of Stalin's crimes some thirty-five years ago. Oh, they knew nothing about it, of course. They believed that it all had been for the good of the people. And confronted with indisputable facts (it was hardly possible, after all, not to notice the slaughter of 60 million people), they would submit as the ultimate justification of their behavior that they were scared. Scared when they marched under red banners and sang revolutionary songs, scared when they raised their hands at the mass meetings in support of the Party's policy, scared when they were rewarded, decorated, and promoted for doing good work. Like the three lucky monkeys who see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil, they believed in communism because they did not know enough to doubt, and they did not know enough to doubt because they were afraid to open their eyes.

Needless to say, we—I mean, my generation—could not be satisfied with such an explanation. Very much like our peers in postwar Germany, we felt betrayed and angry and totally mistrustful of our elders, who were in our view just accomplices of Stalin. Unlike in Germany, however, our Reich was not defeated, our SS-men were still in command. Thus, after a brief "thaw" under Khrushchev, repressions were back in force, and the country went back to its monkey business of seeing, hearing, and speaking no evil. This time, however, we were determined not to let them off so easily. We could not stop the repression, but we could at least make sure that nobody could claim ignorance later. That is what we used to call *glasnost*, long before the word was hijacked by the Party ideologists.

Alas, our efforts did not quite shatter the spells. Thirty-five years later, with the advent of Gorbachev's glasnost, the same story was repeated all over again, as a new wave of official revelations was greeted with the same perplexity. Only this time the extenuations were even feebler: there was less reason to be scared, after all, Brezhnev's regime being just a pale copy of Stalin's hell; and it was much more difficult to plead an honest belief in the ideals of the Party. According to an old saw of the '60s, honesty, intelligence, and a membership in the Communist Party cannot possibly be reconciled in the same individual.

This is a hard time for those who are heavily compromised by the regime and

Citizens' Interests

BEYOND SELF-INTEREST
Edited by
Jane J. Mansbridge
Economists who go beyond "economic man," psychologists who go beyond stimulus response, evolutionary biologists who go beyond the "selfish gene," and political scientists who go beyond the quest for power – these are the contributors to this impressive book. Rejecting the view that human affairs are shaped predominantly by self-interest, they argue that individual behavior and social organization are also influenced by motivations of duty, love, and malevolence. Their conclusions have particular importance in considering how public spirit affects citizen and legislative behavior.
"This is the unusual collection that is of greater value than the sum of its pieces." – Russell Hardin, author of *Morality within the Limits of Reason*
$14.95 paper

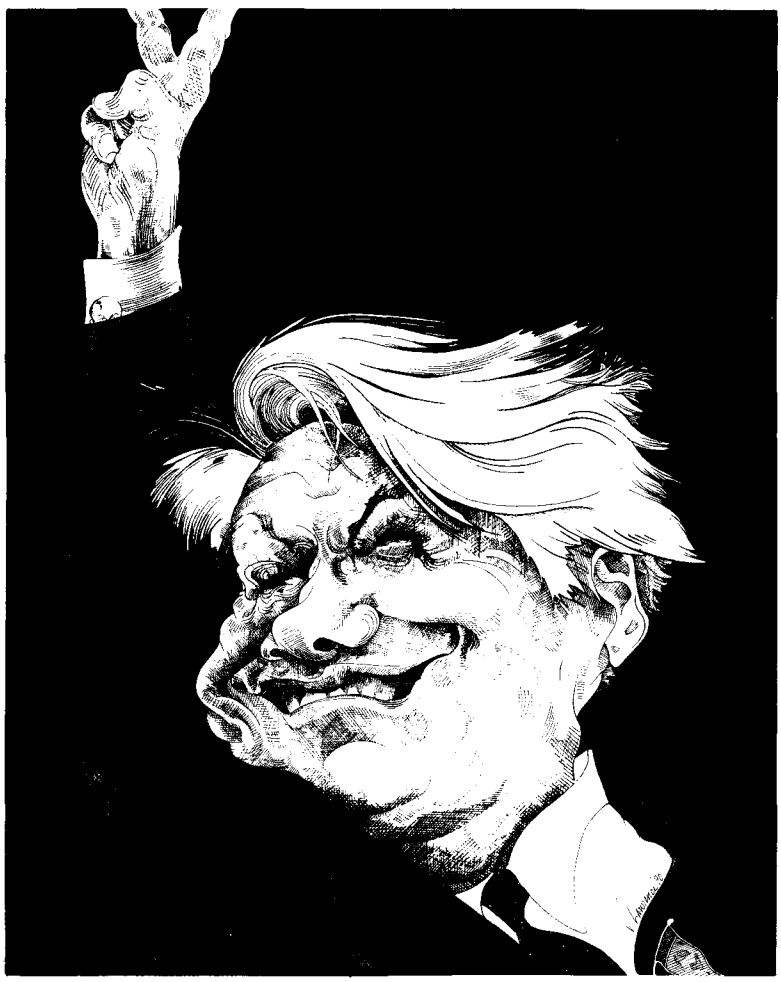
PRAGMATIC LIBERALISM
Charles W. Anderson
Classical liberalism can become inflexible in its abstract notions and conceptions of right. Pragmatism, on the other hand, can devolve into mere expediency. Anderson tempers the excesses of both and suggests a political framework in which liberalism provides the normative structure at present lacking in pragmatism. Arguing that we must dissolve the separation of public and private realms, he proposes that the public interest extends to all organized human enterprises. This broader vision of the domain of political reason gives new meaning to the idea of citizenship.
$29.95 cloth

University of Chicago Press
At bookstores, or call: 1-800-621-2736
In Illinois: 312-568-1550

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yet want to retain a modicum of self-respect. Choosing between dishonesty and stupidity is an awkward dilemma, but it is the dilemma that is going to haunt every Soviet establishment figure in the years to come. These two books nicely illustrate it. Boris Yeltsin, in *Against the Grain*, is trying to prove that he was more thoughtful than he was; Vladimir Pozner, in *Parting with Illusions*, wants us to believe that he is really a rather naive New York liberal from Fifth Avenue.

Pozner lived there, in fact, until he was fifteen, he attended schools "for the children of wealthy—but progressive—parents," he loved baseball. Perhaps, in due time, he could have become one of those liberals—his "wealthy but progressive parents" certainly did everything in their power to bring him up accordingly. Thanks to their efforts, the heroes of "his America" were Sacco and Vanzetti, Joe Hill, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and the other greats of the American left. Pozner's father, a Communist at heart (although not a card-carrying member, as Pozner *fils* never tires of stressing), carried with him to his last day the images and the ideas of the Bolshevik Revolution. Even as an old man, he would weep when he watched a movie that showed a company of Russian revolutionary sailors, "cartridge belts crisscrossing their chests, rifles slung over their shoulders as they strode resolutely past to stop General Yudenich's drive on Red Petrograd."



BORIS YELTSIN BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

And yet, in 1922, Pozner's family had emigrated from the Soviet Union. "Revolution had not fulfilled everyone's expectations." Pozner *père* found himself first in France and then in the United States, with a Soviet passport and openly pro-Soviet views, always thinking of returning to Russia "when things improve," never giving a thought to the Russian multitudes back home who could not tune out from the beloved revolutionary sailors. Quite the contrary. In the Pozner household, "anti-Soviet" ideas were treated with the same disgust reserved for racism or anti-Semitism.

With so much disgust, in fact, that when the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union was transformed into the cold war, the change of political climate that occurred was experienced by the Pozner family as their personal drama. Young Pozner was beaten up at school for being a "Commie traitor." The elder Pozner lost his lucrative job at MGM because he refused to drop his Soviet passport. Their liberal friends disappeared like so many flies in cold weather. At last the family was ready to move back to the promised land of socialism.

In New York, I suppose, young Pozner must have felt like an ugly duckling yearning to fly to swan lake. His world was black and white; or rather, red and white. "It was a world of right and wrong, good and bad, friend and foe. No in-betweens, no shadings." Again, had he not moved to his dreamland at that stage, had he stayed in New York and weathered the cold war, he might have become the typical American liberal that he pretends to be now. We might have believed the innocence in his voice when we read his lamentations about poverty in America, about the power of American big business and the cruelty of McCarthyism, about the virtues of socialism and perestroika.

The truth, however, is that swan lake turned out to be a snake pit, and at the age of eighteen Pozner was thrown into it. He came to Moscow in the last year of Stalin's rule, right at the peak of the last purge. Anti-Semitism was the official policy, denunciations were a daily routine. This last campaign against "cosmopolitans," Jews, intellectuals, foreigners was certainly a shock large enough to shatter anyone's illusions, as were the revelations of the de-Stalinization that followed it. In Pozner's case, he tells us, he was appropriately disabused. By the age of twenty-three (that is, by page 102 of his book), Pozner parted with all the illusions with which he had returned from New York.

The rest of his book, however, should have been called *Parting with Honesty*. What else can one say after closing this volume? On the one hand, we see a cynical and bitter man who understands that Stalin was worse than Hitler, that Khrushchev was "a country bumpkin" and a "laughingstock of the world" but that "Brezhnev was even worse." We see someone who bitterly regrets his father's decision to move back to the Soviet Union, forever a foreign country, where living conditions for most Muscovites, not to mention non-Muscovites, are worse than in Harlem. We see a man beginning to "see the United States in a different light" after meeting a group of American "card-carrying Communists, radicals, liberals, freebooters, FBI informers" during the World Youth Festival in Moscow (though still feeling "totally at home with these people"). He even considers an escape across the border to Finland in order to get "home" to America, although he knows that "emotionally, financially, politically" he will be "in for one hell of a trial."

All this, as I say, on the one hand. On the other hand, we watch him join the Communist Party in 1967, under Brezhnev, and slowly make a career as a Soviet journalist, until finally he arrives at the top of his profession. Why did he

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stubbornly pursue a snakelike career in the snake pit, in a system in which the rule of the game is the survival of the meanest? Why did he join the Party? "On the one hand, there was so much about its leadership that I did not like, so much about Soviet society that I found oppressive and unacceptable. But, on the other hand, how was I to be an active participant, how, if at all, could I influence things without joining the Party?"

This type of argument about joining the Party to improve it was already a source of jokes in Moscow at the time: one does not cure a whore infected with VD by sleeping with her, and so on. And how exactly did Pozner try to achieve his reformist ends? Did he disagree with the Party bosses, or try to expose them in print? Not at all. He went to work for *Soviet Life* magazine, which was published only in English and only for an American audience. Its aim, as he himself observes, "is to present its society in a favorable light. There are two ways of achieving that goal: one is to doctor the facts to make negative aspects of society look much less negative than they really are; the second is to ignore those negative aspects and to focus only, or mainly, on the positive. In both cases, truth is not the objective." Later, working for the American service of Radio Moscow, Pozner finally "solved" the problem of being both a Party member and a journalist:

> I chose subjects that I could write about honestly, subjects that would not lead me into confrontation with my boss or with my conscience. If I feel that the Party has taken an erroneous position, then that is what I must write. If writing that is not possible (as has been the case in the past), then I have no option but to be silent on the matter.

With such an understanding of journalistic ethics one could work for Goebbels. Pozner subscribed to the unwritten rules, the tacit code of behavior, according to which journalists were "soldiers" of the ideological front who were not to play into the enemy's hands.

Pozner wants us to see the pathos in his predicament:

> Like everyone else, I found myself between a rock and a hard place. I knew I would despise myself for compromising on my principles—whether the compromise be on the left or on the right. I had to create an ecological niche of my own, develop a modus vivendi that would allow me to retain my honesty without giving up my freedom. . . . I made a promise to myself that I would not lie. I would not disinform. . . . I made that promise in all honesty, but I cannot honestly say I kept it. It was not that I deliberately misin-

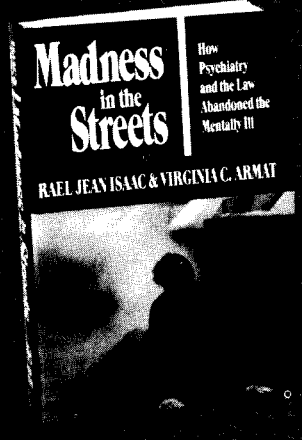
ADVICE AND DISSENT

They're contentious and contagious. They're the McLaughlin Group. (clockwise from left) Jack Germond, Eleanor Clift, John McLaughlin, Fred Barnes, Morton Kondracke, and Pat Buchanan.
Made possible by a grant from GE.

THE MCLAUGHLIN GROUP
Check your local listing for station and time.

We bring good things to life.

"Reveals fully the tragic consequences of the 'commitment to the streets' of the mentally ill–now the mentally ill homeless."
–SENATOR DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, NEW YORK



As a short walk through any American community today painfully reveals, our sidewalks and parks have become open-air mental wards—but with no hope of treatment for their inmates. Rael Jean Isaac and Virginia C. Armat explain why thousands of mentally ill people are now living on our streets—and how powerful cultural and political forces still at work in this country have magnified the tragedy by conveniently pretending that mental illness does not exist.

Madness in the Streets is the first book to identify the still powerful social and political delusions which have justified ignoring the needs of the mentally ill. It reveals the utter failure of our policies affecting the "homeless" - a preferred word which denies a hard truth, for housing itself will not treat the problem.

This devastating account shows compellingly that we must reverse the current trends if this shame on our society is to end.
450 pp.$24.95L. ISBN 0-02-915380-8.

FP THE FREE PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formed my audience. Rather, I censored my statements, I deleted passages that could be threatening to me, I rarely spoke my mind fully. More than once I questioned what was really influencing my decisions—fear for myself and my family's well-being, the desire not to furnish the "enemy" with ammunition, a false patriotism, or a real lack of courage? Probably, a bit of each.

Unfortunately, he did more than such plaintive passages would have us believe. He became the true voice of the Kremlin for millions of Americans. Hardly a week passes without Pozner appearing on the screens of American televisions in every home, using his impeccable English to justify the invasion of Afghanistan, the mistreatment of refuseniks, and the persecution of Sakharov, and to persuade the American public to mistrust *its* elected officials and their policies.

Pozner seems annoyed when some in the West call him a propagandist rather than a journalist. "When I appear on American television or radio, some 'expert' often comes on immediately afterward to analyze me, to explain to that poor gullible audience how well trained I am, what makes me effective, why I can't be trusted." And yet he himself admits:

> While the concept of agitation has always seemed pernicious to most Americans, . . . this has not been the case in the Soviet Union, where agitation has been, and is, seen for what it is: an attempt to win people over to a certain attitude or viewpoint by actively addressing them on the issue. Agitation, like so many other things, is neither good nor bad; it all depends to what use it is put.

The trouble, indeed, is in the use to which it is put. Pozner uses his training to present a liberal image of the Soviet Union, an image that has nothing to do with reality. His acquaintance with his audience makes him deadly effective, to judge not least by the enormous success of his book: he plays on his American viewers' every meliorist prejudice by telling of the peaceful intentions and the generous tendencies of the Soviet rulers. Millions of aging American kids are to believe, with Pozner's ghostwriter Brian Kahn, that to avoid a holocaust they need only organize a joint U.S.-Soviet effort to save the Siberian crane or create a bridge in space. And after such telegenic simplicities, how does one explain to them the complexities of Marxism in theory and in practice? How can anyone doubt this American-ish fellow with this open face and this knowledge of baseball? Back in the Soviet Union, meanwhile, people with different faces and no knowledge of baseball manufacture weapons, torture prisoners, and plot "revolution" in yet another country. They do not appear on American television. (Their English is very poor.)

Pozner wants to know why he is "not accepted by everyone as a human being with his own point of view." The answer is, because he has no point of view. He never had the courage to have one. He knew, he says, that the occupation of Czechoslovakia was wrong, that it was wrong to send people to jail, to labor camps, and to psychiatric wards for their beliefs. He knew these things, he says, but "I could not bring myself to admit it openly." But knowledge is not a point of view, as long as it is not stated openly. Pozner has no point of view that he can call his own, he has only the one that belongs to his masters.

Pozner anticipates his critics:

> You will look for and, of course, find the "reason" for backing off. But if you are honest, then someday you will have to admit that you did it because you were scared, you were weak, because you could not deal with the fear of what was going to happen to your family, to you. And I have had that fear in me. Let he or she condemn it who had the courage to choose the other way.

I guess, then, that I can condemn it. I feel

The National Security Constitution

Sharing Power after the Iran-Contra Affair

Harold Hongju Koh

A "**masterly, unflinching** study" (Theodore Draper, *New York Review of Books*) of the implications of the Iran-contra scandal for the constitutional conduct of national security policy.

"**Valuable....An insightful and thorough** analysis." —Congressman Lee H. Hamilton ***A Yale Fastback***, available in cloth ($35.00) and paper ($14.95)

Conflicts Unending

The United States and Regional Disputes

Richard N. Haass

"A **thoughtful, perceptive, and timely** book about international negotiations and the need for ripeness as an essential element for success. **A lot of people—in and out of government—would benefit from reading it.**"—Sol M. Linowitz $22.50

Allies in Crisis

Meeting Global Challenges to Western Security

Elizabeth D. Sherwood

The first book to explore in depth how the NATO allies have coped with conflicts arising outside of Europe—from the Korean War to the Persian Gulf.

"**Timely and valuable.**"—Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. $25.00

Command, Control, and the Common Defense

C. Kenneth Allard

"An **excellent** analysis of the characteristics of the U.S. military services and the historic attempts to design a truly joint service establishment shaped by a coherent strategy."--Sam C. Sarkesian

"Impressively thorough and clearly presented....This book makes **a major contribution to American defense studies.**"—Paul Y. Hammond Illus. $25.00

The History and Sociology of Genocide

Analyses and Case Studies

Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn

"Here is **a monumental tour de force** on mankind's most monstrous crime. The analysis of the holocaust...is superb....**It brilliantly explores a subject that has been ignored too long.**" —William Proxmire *New in cloth* ($50.00) *and paper* ($19.95)

Published in cooperation with the Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies

At fine bookstores, or from

Yale University Press
Dept. 3770
92A Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pity for Pozner; he never quite grew into a human being.

The world learned about Boris Yeltsin long before anyone interviewed him on television. We all heard first about his meteoric rise in the Soviet firmament and then about his meteoric fall, and still we had no opinion. There were all sorts of rumors about him, there was the official biography, which was not much different from the biographies of many Party functionaries, but little was known. The fact that his political resurrection some months ago was greeted with amazement speaks for itself.

When I saw Yeltsin on television for the first time, a few months after his brutal but short-lived downfall, I could not believe my eyes. It cannot be true, I thought; this type of person does not exist any longer. For looking straight into the camera was a typical Bolshevik, a Bolshevik straight out of central casting. Stubborn, overbearing, self-assured, honest, irresistible, a human engine without brakes—he must have jumped from an armored car just a few minutes ago. We have all seen such faces in the old photographs, except that they were usually dressed in leather jackets, they usually dangled a huge Mauser from their belts, and they were usually executed by Stalin.

Where did they find this man? His autobiography is not much of a book, but it does provide a part of the answer, a few details to add to the portrait. Yeltsin was born in 1931 in Sverdlovsk, into an extremely poor peasant family, just when the country was devastated by collectivization. He was nearly drowned at his baptism by a drunk priest, who was paid for his labor with moonshine, and he was rescued at the last moment by his parents. The priest was not particularly worried, and offered a kind of blessing: "If he can survive such an ordeal, it means he is a good, tough lad, and I name him Boris."

His childhood was joyless: hunger, violence, work. From the age of six he had to look after the younger children and to do all the chores while his parents were working. For the slightest misbehavior, the young Yeltsin was strapped by his quick-tempered father. Yet he was always a ringleader, at school, at the Urals Polytechnic, at the construction site where he was employed as a foreman after graduation. At thirty-two he was already chief manager of a large industrial complex. In 1976 he became first secretary of the provincial Party Committee, and ten years later a non-voting member of the Politburo.

Yeltsin's most outstanding feature is his love of challenge, his appetite for adventure and risk. Some critics have misinterpreted this as braggadocio. Why, they ask, his long descriptions of his youthful exploits, why all these stories about traveling across the country on the roofs of trains, about playing volleyball without two fingers on his hand? Why did he insist on learning all the trades in the construction industry before taking his designated place as a foreman? Those who question Yeltsin's motives, however, do not understand what real socialism is about.

The psychological atmosphere that was created in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and 1940s pushed people to cross the limits of the possible. The slogan of the time was, "When the country commands us to be heroes, each and everyone must become a hero." And there were heroes. They were poorly fed and poorly clothed, but the pilots stormed the skies and the explorers conquered the North Pole. Practically with bare hands they dug canals, built dams, created some of the world's largest industrial complexes. Victorious proletarians marched from triumph to triumph, displaying the irresistible force of collective labor, harnessing the forces of nature, turning deserts into gardens. How could a socialist paradise be created, except by performing a miracle a day? And who but a superman could enter it?

Only much later did they look back and discover that the superhuman and the inhuman go hand in hand. There were a few heroes, but the rest were vic-

STANLEY CROUCH

is

"PROVOCATIVE"

—*Time*

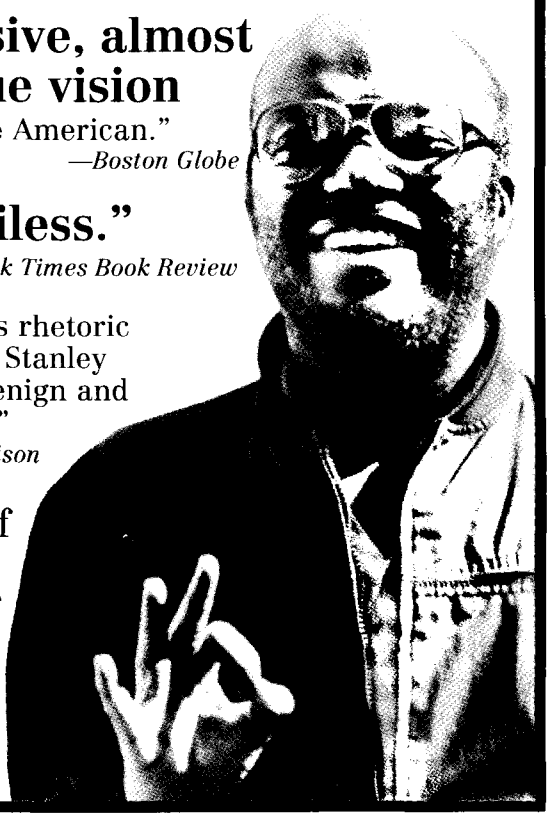
"A writer of exceptional brilliance, powerful enough to command respect even when one disagrees totally with his premise." —*Los Angeles Times*

"He is not only provocative but perceptive and, on more than one occassion, wise." —*The Washington Post Book World*

"An all-inclusive, almost Whitmanesque vision of what it means to be American." —*Boston Globe*

"Bold and pitiless." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"Behind his dissenter's rhetoric and hangman's mask, Stanley Crouch is actually a benign and eloquent provocateur." —*Ralph Ellison*



Judge for yourself

NOTES OF A HANGING JUDGE

New From Oxford

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tims. While some burned with enthusiasm, the rest were terrified. Those magnificent dams and canals turned the rivers into stinking swamps, and those giant industrial complexes turned blooming land into desert, as if nature, the eternal enemy of the people, conspired to wreck the epic effort.

Still, victims and heroes alike remember with nostalgia the time in their youth when life had a clear purpose. Some still believe that another decisive effort, another campaign against corruption, can avert disaster and restore them to the right course. Boris Yeltsin was one of the heroes building socialism twenty hours a day. As first secretary of Sverdlovsk province, which is the third-largest industrial area in the country, he was an exemplary boss, hard-working, demanding, and fair; he even encouraged his subordinates to criticize him, as a good Communist should. Yet he also carried out a secret order from the Politburo to demolish (overnight) the Ipatiev House, in which Czar Nicholas II and his family were executed in 1918, which had become a tourist attraction. Yeltsin actually believed in the ideals and the wisdom of the Party. He had no reservations: his Party, right or wrong. He wept when Stalin died and he condemned Stalin's crimes when they were disclosed.

He was a leader, in other words, ideally suited for the age of perestroika. He was hand-picked by Gorbachev to be first secretary of the Moscow City Committee. There Yeltsin was very much out of place, however, and he quickly became a source of embarrassment for his senior colleagues. Since Stalin's death, true-believing Communists have been perceived as nuisances by Muscovites. Publicly, everyone pretends to be a true believer, of course; but privately they live by exchanging favors, goods, and services, helping each other as good neighbors should in a time of disaster. *True* true believers are a dying breed, found mainly among old-age pensioners.

If such a monster appeared in a healthy Soviet collective, he could be dangerous. Everyone's livelihood might be threatened by this bull in the china shop. I doubt that Gorbachev knew what was he doing when he appointed Yeltsin to be absolute master of Moscow. Surely he did not want to destroy Moscow, only to shake it up, but he dropped a bomb on his capital. From eight in the morning until two the next morning, Yeltsin was in action, fighting corruption, punishing incompetence, pursuing the "mafia"—and still he "could not get to the bottom of the filthy well." Hundreds of trade officials were sacked by the true believer, 60 percent of the Party bosses were purged. And yet things got even worse, while his senior Party colleagues were becoming less supportive and more alarmed. Who knows? Had there been more people like Yeltsin in the Party leadership, we might not be witnessing the end of communism.

The higher Yeltsin was promoted, the more he encountered corruption and incompetence. His first serious doubts about his Party coincided with his promotion to the upper echelons of power. There he became aware of the privileges enjoyed by the Party elite. Later, after becoming a member of the Politburo, he discovered that "on the summit of Olympus, the caste system was scrupulously observed," and that the privileges were enormous. It happened also that he was assigned a villa that was previously occupied by Gorbachev, and he found the luxury repulsive:

> If you have climbed all the way to the top of the establishment pyramid, then it's full communism! And it turns out that there was no need of the world revolution, maximum labor productivity, and universal harmony in order to have reached that ultimate, blissful state as prophesied by Karl Marx. It is perfectly possible to attain it in one particular country—for one particular group of people.

At the very top, he looked around and was deeply depressed by what he saw. His colleagues in the Politburo were just boring, incompetent windbags:

> This, after all, is the general staff of perestroika. These are the brains of the Party, the best minds in the country. But what did I expect? All the members of Politburo are either career bureaucrats who have slowly climbed the ladder of the Central Committee's hierarchy, apparatchiks to the marrow of their bones, or they are former regional or provincial secretaries—such as Gorbachev and Ligachev and a certain Yeltsin, who also made their Party careers during Brezhnev's era of stagnation. . . . I sometimes wonder how I managed to end up among those people.

Finally it dawned on Yeltsin that he and Gorbachev probably want completely different things from "perestroika." He, Yeltsin, wishes to save the country from destruction. Gorbachev wishes to change as little as possible. Hence Gorbachev's chief weakness, his fear of taking the decisive but difficult steps that are needed. "The main trouble with Gorbachev is that he has never worked out a systematic, long-term strategy. There are only slogans."

It occurred to Yeltsin, moreover, that his promotion, as well as the promotion of some others, was just a well-calculated move in a game whose purpose was precisely not to change too much while producing the impression of a fierce struggle. "If I did not exist, Gorbachev would have to invent me," Yeltsin writes, as, indeed, he would have to invent Ligachev and the "conservatives." Yeltsin reached the point at which he could remain neither first secretary of the Moscow City Committee or a member of the Politburo.

And yet he still believed in perestroika, he still was persuaded of the ultimate wisdom of the Party, if only it could be purged of bureaucrats and if "a majority of the Politburo membership [could be] replaced by younger, fresher faces, by energetic people who did not think in clichés." If only he could speak to the Party, things might improve. When the chance to speak at the Party Plenum in the fall of 1987 finally came, however, he was afraid. He knew that he might not survive his imminent "civil execution." And yet he had to speak his mind or "become a different person." "The important thing was to screw up my courage and say what I had to say."

What followed was, indeed, a civil execution, "when, eyes ablaze, people came up to the rostrum who had long worked beside me, who were my friends, with whom I was on excellent terms" and betrayed him. And that was just the beginning. Later another Plenum was convened, and then another, to which he was dragged half-dead after a heart attack to be exposed to the same abuse and the same betrayal. "What do you call it when a person is murdered with words? Because what followed was like a real murder. . . . They were a pack of hounds. A pack ready to tear me to pieces. I cannot describe it any other way."

This shock almost killed him. He spent two months in the hospital, where he searched his soul:

> It is hard to describe the state I was in. A real battle had started up within me. I would analyze every step I had taken, every word I'd spoken. I would analyze my principles, my views of the past, the present, the future. I would analyze my personal relationships with people and even with my family. I was engaged in a constant, obsessive process of analysis, day and night, night and day. . . . All that was left where my heart had been was a burned-out cinder. Everything around me was burned out, everything within me was burned out.

By the time Yeltsin recovered from his nearly fatal illness, he was another man. A Communist had died. A human being was born.

Boris Yeltsin's second life has been no less tempestuous than his first one. From the start he was perceived by the people as the only true alternative to Gorbachev, as someone capable of fighting against

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PARENTS: SIGN UP NOW FOR STUDENT AID!

Whatever they're planning on studying...chances are, we've been studying it, too. And to send along a little student aid in the form of the New Republic's special brand of intelligence, wit and insight, we've created a special subscription, with a special price, just for students and educators. Fill out the offer below. A weekly course in The New Republic means great extra-curricular reading for *your* favorite students.

YES! Start my special student/educator's subscription to The New Republic today; thirty-four weeks for just $24.99. (U.S. addresses only)

Send to:
Name _____
College/University _____ Grad. Yr. _____
Address _____

Bill to:
Name _____
Address _____

Please charge my:
☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX
Acct. # _____
Exp. Date _____ Interbank _____
Signature _____

Allow 3-5 weeks for delivery of first issue
Offer good only on *new* student and educator subscriptions

Mail to:
The New Republic
P.O. Box 56515
Boulder, CO 50322
For fast startup outside of Colorado call 1-800-274-6350

29066

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Party. The more he attacked the Party, the more his popularity grew, until he became a kind of St. George. His ideas at that stage were, ironically, not too different from Gorbachev's, and he even remained a member of the Central Committee; but almost 90 percent of the citizens of Moscow voted for him in the elections to the People's Congress in 1989. For the first time in seventy years, the country expressed its will in some sort of elections, and it voted clearly against the leadership wherever it had a chance.

In the ensuing months, the rapid polarization of the country and the logic of political struggle drove Yeltsin and Gorbachev further apart. Yeltsin had the courage to subject himself to the judgment of the nation, and received a popular mandate; Gorbachev never took the risk, and became a hostage of the Party. That fact, more than anything else, determined their subsequent political evolution. Reflecting the differences in their respective bases of power, Gorbachev must hold together a disintegrating empire, even if it requires violence and repression, while Yeltsin must support republics in their rebellion against the center. One chose democracy and left the Party, as a logical conclusion of his human and political development. The other has no choice but to defend the Party to the bitter end.

The evolution of Yeltsin in the last year has been quite spectacular. He started as a populist, campaigning mostly against Party privileges, but he ended as a democrat, advocating the most radical program of privatization. Initially suspicious of his intentions, the finest intellectual forces in the country have now joined his team. One can only guess how many more baptisms this man will have to survive before the country finally frees itself from the Communists. At present, however, and for at least as long as the Party continues to play a significant role, Yeltsin seems to be the only credible leader of the democratic opposition in Russia.

And yet it is difficult to predict what will happen to Yeltsin when the crisis is over, because his Communist past will certainly come to haunt him in any contest with a younger democrat with a "clean" record. He knows it:

> I have always understood why many decent people have continued to regard me with suspicion even after I had fallen into disfavor. It is because Yeltsin is still seen as a Party functionary, a former first secretary of a provincial committee. It is impossible to attain that position, still less to be promoted to the Central Committee, and remain decent, fair, courageous, and independent. To make a career in the Party—and this belief is universally held by Soviet people—a person must excel at adapting his personality and convictions to whatever is required by the powers to be at any given moment. He must be dogmatic and learn to do or say one thing while thinking something else. It is no use trying to justify oneself and make excuses.

In the final analysis, for all his many lives, and however unfairly, Boris Yeltsin may be no more than a transitional figure in the Soviet Union, like Imre Pozsgay in Hungary or Alexander Dubček in Czechoslovakia. Only a figure of impeccable moral authority can lead the country to its spiritual recovery after so many decades of lies and crimes.

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY is a prominent Soviet human rights activist who lives in Cambridge, England. He is the author of *To Build a Castle: My Life as a Dissenter* (Viking) and, most recently, *Le URSS: De l'utopie au désastre* (Robert Lafont).

The Hyper-Intellectual

BY ARTHUR C. DANTO

Selected Writings
by Jean Baudrillard
edited, with an introduction, by Mark Poster
translated by Jacques Mourrain
(Stanford University Press, 230 pp., $32.50, $10.95 paper)

America
by Jean Baudrillard
translated by Chris Turner
(Verso, 129 pp., $29.50, $13.95 paper)

Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond
by Douglas Kellner
(Stanford University Press, 246 pp., $35, $11.95 paper)

One might drive a pin through any text by Jean Baudrillard of the past fifteen years or so and strike a phrase like "Simulation is master, and nostalgia, the phantasmal parodic rehabilitation of all lost referentials, alone remains." This one happens to serve as the epigraph by Baudrillard to a report from the East Village correspondent to the hyper-contemporary Swiss art publication *Parkett*, and as an example of what is no longer to be heard in the mean streets of his beat: "Few knowing people in the artworld still speak of simulacra, the hyperreal, or the ecstasy of communication." For a fevered moment, however, they did; simulacra of Baudrillardian discourse constituted the critical discourse of the advanced art magazines, and his name expressed prophetic authority on the aesthetically condescending lips of those in the know.

That was in the mid- to late 1980s, when it was believed that what a small number of hyper-advanced artists were doing represented to perfection what Baudrillard declared had happened in postmodern society: that, in consequence of the ubiquity of the media, simulacra had replaced representations of the real. This, of course, left the question of whether Baudrillard, or the artists he putatively enfranchised, themselves represented what had really happened, or were merely simulacra in their own right. If they were representing the truth, then simulation had obviously not taken over completely; and if they were simulacra, the question then had to arise as to why they should be believed. But logic in those days was an infrequent visitor in the precincts in which this discourse echoed.

If everything today is simulacrum, there is something self-defeating in supposing that what sets off the art that is happening from everything else is the fact that *it* is simulacra. So it is not surprising that Bau-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drillard should have disavowed those artists who particularly appropriated his philosophy as defining their aesthetic. "They don't understand," Baudrillard said to me in the spring of 1987, at a dinner held in his honor, after a lecture sponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art. In truth he might have meant the entire rapt audience that evening, in front of whom he constructed, word upon word, a wall of impenetrable prose. But in fact he had in mind those artists—Peter Halley, Jeff Koons, Meyer Vaissman, Heim Steinbach, and some others—from whom he publicly dissociated himself in a lecture he delivered later that week at Columbia University.

Those artists made up the almost instantaneously defunct Neo Geo movement, oddly named since none of their work seemed even residually geometrical. And though Koons at that time was producing, or causing the production of, stainless steel simulacra of plastic bunny rabbits, for the most part Neo Geo work did not obviously display any of the Baudrillardian credentials it was held essential to grasp, if one was to understand it. It must be conceded, though, that there was scant temptation to class a work by Vaissman as real—so it must be simulacrum, if these are the only categories that count. But ordinarily "simulacrum" is what philosophers call intentional: it requires an object, in that something is a simulacrum *of* something. And one would be hard-pressed to identify the intentional objects of a lot of Neo Geo work, though Halley's paintings did have contents that resembled reduced diagrams.

The repudiated artists might as easily have been the repudiators, so incidental is the connection between the theory of hyper-reality and its practice. Baudrillard believes, rightly as a philosopher, that a good philosophical theory of art yields no stylistic imperatives, and he has resisted being forced into the role of art critic, which has mainly meant, in America, issuing such imperatives and rewarding with praise the work that heeds them—acting, in Robert Hughes's phrase, as a cheerleader. Had Plato intended as philosophical the theory that art is mimesis, then he could not praise a work for being mimetic, since it wouldn't be art if it wasn't, in case the theory were true. Philosophy is of no real use to artists whatever.

On the other hand, Baudrillard's idiom did seem adapted to certain issues that were being raised from within the artworld with a certain urgency. Questions, for example, of originality and authenticity. Sherrie Levine's appropriation of the work of Walker Evans through rephotographing it, for example, raised some very deep issues as to how her work differed from Evans's, even though her "After Walker Evans" of 1981 looked exactly like Evans's famous image of a sharecropper's wife of 1941. Why was Levine's a "work" and not just a reproduction? And beyond that, the borders between art and reality became vexed when it was possible to ask whether the East Village was itself not a kind of evolving performance in which artists were simulacra of artists, and all the relationships between and among individuals who participated in that form of life were hyper-realizations of the relationships in the real world.

The difficulty is that Baudrillard's view of simulation applied at least as much to the real world as to the artworld. It was offered as a sociological ontology of the way things are in postmodernity. The East Village might have been said to stand to society at large in the way in which, in one of his analyses, prisons stand to society at large: "Prisons are there to conceal the fact that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, which is carceral." David Rimanelli (the *Parkett* correspondent mentioned above) is being ironic when he gives this much to Baudrillard: "At least one '80s feeling endures: in Soho as in the East Village, simulation is real." But that is no confirmation at all: what would make Baudrillard come out true would

Political Insights

WOMEN, POLITICS, AND CHANGE
Louise A. Tilly and Patricia Gurin, eds.
"...thoughtfully and forcefully reveals the character of women's engagement in every sphere of political behavior from party politics to social activism." – Cynthia Fuchs Epstein
$45.00 688 pp. 0-87154-884-4

NEW PEOPLE IN OLD NEIGHBORHOODS
The Role of New Immigrants in Rejuvenating New York's Communities
Louis Winnick
A provocative look at the importance of new immigrants to the growth of New York's—and the nation's—economy and neighborhoods. $34.95 329 pp. 0-87154-952-2

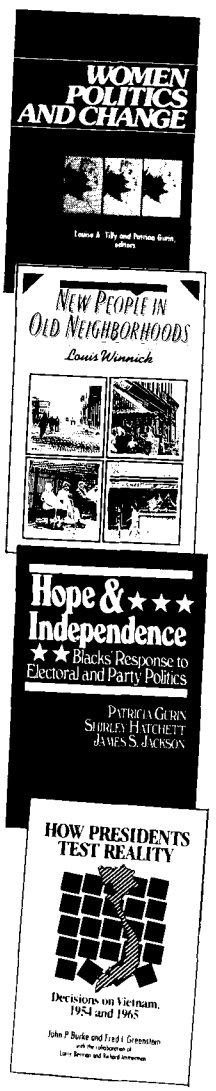
HOPE AND INDEPENDENCE
Blacks' Response to Electoral and Party Politics
Patricia Gurin, Shirley Hatchett, and James S. Jackson
"...an outstanding achievement....will be considered the path-breaking treatment of black political attitudes for many years to come." —Thomas E. Cavanagh, *The Johns Hopkins Center for the Study of American Government*
$37.50 368 pp. 0-87154-374-5

HOW PRESIDENTS TEST REALITY
Decisions on Vietnam, 1954 and 1965
John P. Burke and Fred I. Greenstein with the collaboration of Larry Berman and Richard Immerman
"Burke and Greenstein have written what amounts to an owner's manual for operating the National Security Council....This is a book Reagan's people could have used and George Bush ought to read." —Bob Schieffer, *The Washington Monthly* $29.95 340 pp. 0-87154-175-0

Now in paperback—

FROM MANY STRANDS
Ethnic and Racial Groups in Contemporary America
Stanley Lieberson and Mary C. Waters
$14.95 paper 304 pp. 0-87154-527-6

THE HISPANIC POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES
Frank D. Bean and Marta Tienda
$18.95 paper 480 pp. 0-87154-105-X



Russell Sage Foundation

At bookstores or order toll-free **1-800-666-2211**

112 East 64th Street
New York, NY 10021

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

require that the whole of society, from East Harlem to North Dakota, should have so evolved that the real is simulation. But how would we ever know?

Baudrillard is a sociologist who first attracted attention as a critic of Marxism, which he came to feel had no application in the modern world. If one were to seek an artistic correlative to his view, one need look no further than Warhol, who, in 1977, exhibited some of the most remarkable images of his career—paintings of the hammer and sickle, but uncrossed, as if to say that the dreaded symbol of International Communism had lost its semiological energy, and at the same time that the theory that underwrote it, classical Marxism, had also lost its energy, since it was incapable of dealing with works such as these signs of signs.

"If there is one thing Marx did not think about," Baudrillard wrote in *The Mirror of Production* in 1973, "it was discharge, waste, sacrifice, prodigality, play, and symbolism." Marx thought about production, but this was primarily if not exclusively "the production of useful ends (the canonical definition of labor as value in the framework of political economy and the anthropological definition of labor as human finality)." Baudrillard is here engaged in a polemic with Julia Kristeva and others who were endeavoring to find an aesthetic in Marx's writing, Baudrillard's point being that there is and can be none. The hammer and sickle emblemize the human condition, workers of the world bearing tools as the saints bear the instruments of their martyrdom, but as the telos of history. There would be no room in such a theory for thinking of the power that the hammer and sickle had as a sign, and certainly none for thinking of that sign entering the world of art as a form of play, in what Saul Steinberg wonderfully described as a "political still life."

More important, for Baudrillard's purposes, if Marx cannot yield an aesthetic, he cannot yield guidance in the world as it is today, because that world is to be understood in terms not of production but of consumption. It cannot be explained through the modification of reality, but rather through the system of meanings that products have for consumerism as a form of life. "In order to find a realm beyond economic value . . . *the mirror of production* in which all western metaphysics is reflected must be broken." We are, Baudrillard writes in conclusion to this essay, at a point where the critique of political economy is complete, and we must now move to a radically different level of criticism. Baudrillard calls this "the critique of the political economy of the sign," and his classical formulation of it occurred in 1976, in *Symbolic Exchange and Death*.

It is important to stress that, for Baudrillard, Marxism is a completed but limited social analysis. The limitations are historical and theoretical. Historically, the entire system of social organization that Marx analyzed in terms of class struggle has reached closure, and we have entered a new phase of history for which that analysis is theoretically inadequate, inasmuch as the reality now to be understood is symbolic exchange. Marx would have regarded symbolic enactment as epiphenomenal, as a pale reflection of the material forces of production. Marx thought Hegel had everything upside down, but history has turned Marx upside down: "Simulation," declares Baudrillard, "is master."

It can be argued, of course, that there have always been semiotic systems through which people's lives were defined. The kinds of analyses that Roland Barthes gave of fashion, for example, have application as much to the nineteenth century as the twentieth, as much to the thirteenth as to the nineteenth. There has always been a language of signs that one acquires in acquiring one's culture. Baudrillard apparently feels that in our era, defined through the ubiquity of television, signs have replaced reality completely. We might call this semiotic idealism.

The old idealism, of Berkeley and to a degree of Hegel, held that outside the mind there is nothing. Modern idealism, of Wittgenstein and, with qualifications, of Derrida, is that outside of language there is nothing—there is no *hors de texte*, in Derrida's famous phrase. What recent French thinkers undertook to do was to widen, drastically, the concept of language to the point where everything exists in systems of significations. This would have been Barthes's view, it was certainly the view of Lévi-Strauss, it certainly characterizes Lacan's idea that symptoms form a semiotic system. We might possibly think of Ferdinand Braudel as supposing that the *longue durée* is defined by a system of signs that continue to give meanings whatever the surface perturbations of history.

The difference between these thinkers and Baudrillard is this: each of them comes from a certain discipline, from anthropology, linguistics, history, psychoanalysis, philosophy, textual criticism. For each of them, semiotics is an expansion of the discipline. Baudrillard, to be sure, comes from sociology, but for him, sociology meant Marxism, and Marxism is impotent to deal with symbolic reality. So he had to embark into unexplored territory without hammer or sickle. "In truth," he writes, "there is nothing left to ground ourselves on. All that is left is theoretical violence. Speculation to the death, whose only method is the radicalization of all hypotheses."

Marxism is dead, everything is permitted. From this point on, Baudrillard's

Contract

People in the contracting phase [of the universe] . . .
would remember events in the future. . . .

Stephen W. Hawking

It's the singular grace of gravity holding things up.
It's the beauty of an instant's obvious end—
the crystal lampstand leaping into light
from some fragments and dust, the rain pool waving
inward to embrace each sudden, warming drop.

Won't our lives be joyful together and often sad?
Won't the thousand more evident days and nights
burn with a future to lend us, like prophets
peering backward, a vision so true we complete it
merely by walking into each moment already resolved?

Stranger, my spouse, let's promise our children the world.
Let's ease into our lives with the certitude of lovers
whose futures are fact—two torn to one—and whose pasts
tighten deep into the dim, thrilling regions of art.
It's the singular gift of the present binding us now.

DAVID BAKER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

writing takes on the quality of free-associational hysteria. The claim that reality is (now) all simulacrum is itself a fairly good example of "theoretical violence," of what Baudrillard will at times call "nihilism" or even "terrorism." For it sounds inherently and transparently false, in part because of the intentional character of the concept of simulacrum.

Here, in a general way, is what I think Baudrillard is saying, and it turns on a thesis about meaning. It was Saussure who reconceived the concept of meaning in such a way that terms do not acquire their meanings from what they stand for (the " 'Fido'-Fido" theory of meaning, as Gilbert Ryle called it), but from the differences between it and other signs that make up a total system. Saussure's concept of difference was taken up by Derrida, who used it to combat what he termed "the metaphysics of presence." For Derrida, as for Saussure, something has meaning only in the context of a total system, so meaning does not, as it were, flow into the system from the references of its component terms. Rather, it flows out of the system to those references (so far as reference is even allowed), so that each designation carries the weight of the whole complex of meaning. The truth, as Bradley put it, is the whole. And since we don't go outside the system for meanings, there is no *hors de texte*. What Baudrillard means by simulacrum, in contrast with reality, is a system of differences where we cannot meaningfully speak of something outside the system: the system absorbs, as it were, whatever we might think of as outside it, so that everything is taken up into a totalizing complex of meanings.

Consider Warhol again, this time not as a painter but as an aphorist. At one point he discusses female impersonators of the kind he was surrounded by in his days as a moviemaker. "It is very hard work to look like the opposite of what nature made you, and then to be an imitation woman of what was only a fantasy woman in the first place." The kind of women-movie stars impersonated by female impersonators, for example, are themselves fantasists of femininity—hyper-feminine, as Baudrillard might say. But when the fantasy becomes so much a part of reality that women internalize the fantasy of women imitating them, what then are women "really"? We can, of course, make Y-chromosomes the criterion, but we will then have left behind whatever it means to be feminine, and Warhol's point was that no clear line between reality and the imaginative representation of reality can be drawn. And to the degree that men's conceptions of themselves are fantasies, in which fantasies of women by women play a role, the sexes together form a simulacrum, in the sense that it cannot be easy to say, it may indeed be impossible to say, what reality is, other than the way in which it is represented.

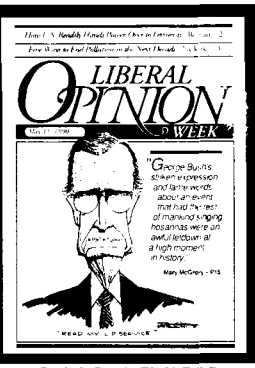
"Imagine truth having absorbed all the energy of the false," Baudrillard writes. "You have simulation." And he goes on: "We have become completely absorbed by models, completely absorbed by fashion, completely absorbed by simulation." Surely this has always been true. Think of how Christians defined themselves against the fantasy of original sin, think of how saints adopted *Imitatio Christi* as a moral imperative, think of how they had to imagine Christ if this imitation was to be moral. Baudrillard's thought is only that this process has been accelerated to infinity by the media, and especially by television, construed not as an agency outside history, which documents and records what happens as it happens, but as the great shaping form of postmodern history, defining what is to be a meaningful event, to the point that we cannot conceive of life outside the framework of video. This is not changing the world in the sense that Marx meant it, in the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach. It is revolutionizing what it is to understand the world, not as something reflected in the mirror of production, but as a simulation on the screen of fantasy.

It is fairly clear that Baudrillard had in mind a thesis too vast and total to take as convincing illustrations of itself the Day-Glo flow-charts of Peter Halley or the rebarbative bunnies in stainless steel by Jeff Koons. One of Baudrillard's best paradigms was Disneyland: "a perfect model of all the tangled orders of simulation." Everyone will concede that Disneyland is artifice through and through, a penny world of pasteboard and plaster architectures of fantasy and desire, a playland of stunted souls. What Baudrillard presumes to see beyond this is that

> the objective profile of the United States . . . may be traced through Disneyland, even down to the morphology of individuals and the crowd. All its values are exalted here, in miniature and comic-strip form. Embalmed and pacified. Disneyland is there to conceal the fact that it is the real country. . . . Disneyland is presented in order to make us believe that the rest is real, when in fact all of Los Angeles and the America surrounding it are no longer real, but of the order of the hyper-real and the imaginary.

Baudrillard's book on America is in effect the record of a "trip" through an expanded Disneyland, and an exercise in theoretical violence. In its own right it is

LIBERAL OPINION WEEK



SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

A New Liberal Voice

LIBERAL OPINION WEEK

reprints current syndicated, editorial commentary by over 36 influential columnists and America's most talented cartoonists – all with liberal viewpoints.

Enjoy A Pantheon of Pundits

Follow every column, as a rule, by Mary McGrory, David Broder, Tom Wicker, Colman McCarthy, Richard Cohen, Michael Kinsley, Jesse Jackson.

And humorists Art Buchwald, Russell Baker, Mark Russell, Dave Barry, Andy Rooney, Mike Royko, Roger Simon.

Plus Bob Greene, Coretta Scott King, Murray Kempton, Neal Peirce, Ralph Nader, Les Payne, Sandy Grady, Carl Rowan, Nat Hentoff, Ellen Goodman, Jimmy Breslin.

As well as most columns by James Hoagland, Germond and Witcover, William Raspberry, Lars-Erik Nelson, Anthony Lewis, Hobart Rowen, Chris Matthews, William Schneider, William Pfaff, Linda Ellerbee.

Discover A Thousand Points of Bite

Every week, delight in the barbs by Feiffer, Oliphant, Conrad, Toles, Herblock, Szep, Peters, Wasserman, Marlette, Mauldin, Borgman, Sack, Summers, Powell, Luckovich, Payne, Rogers and many other cartoonists.

Just $36 for one year, 52 issues

Tabloid size • Reference guide
No paid ads • By subscription only

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

Call Toll-Free: 800 338-9335
(Business Hours Central Time)

Published by LIVING HISTORY, INC.
Educational reprints since 1960.

LIBERAL OPINION WEEK
P.O. BOX 468-B , VINTON, IA 52349
❒ YES, send 1 year (52 issues) for $36
❒ Payment Enclosed ❒ Bill Me
Name _____
Address _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a Gallic dream of hilarious distortion.

The prefix "hyper" connotes a marked degree of excess, and the pedantic will ask, of course, in what way something can be excessively real. It would be like being too self-identical, identical to a point of supererogation. But Baudrillard's notion is a good one: the hyperreal is the cultural product of the imaginary acting upon the real, intensifying and transforming it. So the female impersonator seeks to emulate a woman whose image of femininity acts upon biological truth to produce something beyond biology, beyond gender, the enfleshment of fantasy. Hypersexuality is sex raised to a higher power by imagination, yielding pornography as its product. Fashion aspires to hyperbeauty: "The amazing aspect of fashion is that it is more beautiful than the beautiful: it is fascinating." Or: "Fashion is the ecstasy of the beautiful: the pure and empty form of a spiraling aesthetics. Simulation is the ecstasy of the real." In general, "Every characteristic thus elevated to the superlative power, caught in an intensifying spiral—more true than true, more beautiful than the beautiful, more real than the real—is assured a vertiginous effect that is independent of all content or specific quality, and which has the tendency of being our only passion."

I suppose that those who urge a return to ancient values are, in fact, advocates of hyper-morality—a degree of familiarity too acute for the reality of family life. I leave as an exercise for the reader to work out the implications of hyper-cuisine, hypermarriage, hyperhealth: Disneyfications all of ordinary and indispensable human practices. And one need not seek far for examples of hyperinterpretation when reading Baudrillard. There are passages of hermeneutical inspiration, such as his discussion of trompe l'oeil painting that, whether it altogether supports his views of simulation, certainly exemplifies his style at its best, though even it sheers off into a certain falsehood so transparent that letting it stand seems perverse. But, as he observes, "Truth only complicates things." And "To the more true than true we will oppose the more false than false." It wouldn't be hypertruth without a fine admixture of falsehood, just as fashion is "the beautiful that has absorbed all the energy of the ugly."

So it is never easy to get your bearings. A lot of Baudrillard's prose is a mudge of pseudo-science enhanced by blague. My sense is that Baudrillard is less a writer than a performer of some kind, a sporadically brilliant illusionist whose feats of analysis are capable of making salient features of social reality that might never come to consciousness without him. Mark Poster's anthology will give you most of the main ideas and a number of his characteristic pieces. If you really want more, you are in danger of turning into a hyper-reader, and transforming the text under the power of your imagination into something of the sort it became in the hands of the Neo Geos and their apologists. At this point you are taking Baudrillard too seriously.

The best antidote for that (for most readers the best antidote to Baudrillard is more Baudrillard) is Douglas Kellner's superb book. It is clear, scholarly, full of bright criticism, deconstructive, and devastating. For Kellner, who has his own political agenda, Baudrillard is finally "ever more bizarre, trivial, reactionary, and pataphysical." Baudrillard's writings are a kind of intellectual Disneyland, neither true nor false, as he says of "The Disneyland imaginary." Just as Disneyland is designed to make its visitors feel that adults are elsewhere when the truth is that "childishness is everywhere," so Baudrillard's sideshows and roller coasters may make you think that sober thinkers are elsewhere when in fact truth is everywhere these days in desperate need of rescue. Baudrillard is but one example of the hyper-intellectual at work and at play.

ARTHUR C. DANTO is Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy at Columbia and the author most recently of *Encounters and Reflections: Art in the Historical Present* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

Laughter and Forgetting

BY RICHARD JENKYNS

The Oxford Book of Humorous Prose edited by Frank Muir

(Oxford University Press, 1,200 pp., $35)

Over the years Frank Muir has done much to add to the gaiety of his nation. In the 1950s, with his partner Denis Norden, he wrote the scripts for *Take It From Here*, perhaps the funniest radio show that the BBC ever broadcast. Muir has also been a stalwart of the wittier kinds of panel game on radio and latterly on television, so that he is now affectionately familiar to millions for his mustache, his lisp (one has the fancy that his words are tangled in the face fungus and struggling to get out), his pink bow ties, and his cheerful-lugubrious expression, like a bloodhound that has just received unusually good news. If it were possible to look dapper and shambly at the same time, Muir would be the man to do it. He has a (more or less) serious side too: he has been a BBC administrator (of light entertainment) and contributed to the Dictionary of National Biography.

So he may well have seemed to Oxford University Press an ideal compiler for an anthology of humor, and it is with something of a pang that I have to say that the result is a deep disappointment. Of course there are good things in the book. How could there not be? A book of this kind properly includes a fair number of old favorites, but in a good anthology there is also an element of imagination and discovery, the sense of a personal taste at work. This anthology lacks a saving unpredictability; the pieces that amused me were almost all old friends. There are few surprises, and hardly any of these give delight. Muir's choices are conventional, and even among these there is far too much dross.

There were difficulties, perhaps, from the start. What is the use, thought Alice, of a book without pictures or conversation? And what is the use, one might add, of a book of humor that is too bulky to be read comfortably in bed? Eleven hundred pages of unceasing merriment is enough to bring out the Scrooge in the sunniest temperament. And Muir does not help matters with the bits of running commentary that break up the book; even if these were less slapdash and inaccurate, he should not be explaining the jokes to us in advance. Anyone who has watched a film with a companion who insists on announcing when a good bit is coming will know why this is not a good idea.

No doubt Muir was right, on the other hand, to make his task more manageable by excluding drama. This means, inevitably, that Britain's top humorist, William Shakespeare, is missing altogether. And some of the rhythm of literary history is lost: *The Importance of Being Earnest* origi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nates the style of dialogue that was to be developed by Saki and Wodehouse (both represented here by well-chosen pieces). The complete omission of Wilde is an oddity in any case.

Most of the faults, though, are due not to the awkwardness of the project itself, but to the slipshod way in which it has been carried out. The book purports to be "an anthology *raisonnée*," a survey of humor across six centuries. In the event, the fifteenth century is disposed of in two pages, the sixteenth in twelve, the seventeenth in sixteen. The eighteenth century rates about seventy-five pages, and from then on the coverage expands steadily up to the present day. The result is that for the first few hundred pages the whole spirit is grudging. We get wretched little snippets of Swift, Smollett, Jane Austen, and the like, but they are treated less expansively than such great masters of humor as E. F. Benson and Leslie Thomas. Since Muir evidently has next to no interest in any humor earlier than 1850, he would have done better to start his anthology there, rather than struggle his way to such a muddle.

Equally confused are Muir's ideas about what sorts of writing should be included. His preface is rambling and self-contradictory. It is not worth giving it a great deal of attention (though there is one remarkable giveaway, to which I will come back), but we may note his claim that humor is one of the three divisions of comedy: wit is aristocratic, buffoonery proletarian, humor is middle-class. I doubt whether these definitions will hold water for a moment, but they give us a notion of what Muir, generally though not consistently, reckons humorous prose to be. The book's dust jacket features an oddly joyless Edwardian picture of a parson chortling over a copy of *Punch*, in the style of those paintings of merry friars quaffing sack that can still occasionally be seen, along with the flock wallpaper and the stained-oak-style panelling, in a certain kind of olde-English hostelry.

Muir's own tastes would probably chime pretty well with the parson's: the prevailing flavor is middlebrow facetious. In the earlier parts of the book, famous novelists like Sterne, Dickens, and Thackeray are allowed to strut their stuff, but once we get on to the twentieth century the professional jokesmiths take over, and the literary novel—Evelyn Waugh apart—hardly appears at all. There are rare exceptions, when a sudden concession is made to the highbrows. Someone has told Muir that Joyce cannot be left out, so here he is, looking weirdly out of place in these surroundings. (*Ulysses* is a comic masterpiece, but would you describe the end of Molly's monologue as humorous prose? Not quite the mot juste, I think.)

Essays, memoirs, and reportage are barely included at all. It is probably tiresome of reviewers to complain about the names that they consider unjustly excluded, so I shall suppress my own longish list. A protest must be made, though, about the treatment of some of those who do get in. Max Beerbohm, who was not only a great wit and a subtle imagination but could also be broadly hilarious, is permitted only a piece of pallid belles-lettrisme (this looks like another misguided attempt to appease the highbrows); there is nothing from his masterpieces, *A Christmas Garland* and *Seven Men*. Michael Frayn, an uneven writer, brilliant at his best, and Paul Jennings, one of the most enchanting and original humorous minds of our time, who died earlier this year, are represented by one weakish piece each, miles below the top of their form.

On the whole Muir likes his humor to be harmless. Still, despite (or because of) his middle-class credo, he is anxious not to be shockable. So as we get near the present day, we are treated to one or two passages of routine smut, and even to two short words that have not, perhaps, appeared in an Oxford anthology before. We are also given, all on its own, a single sentence from Kingsley Amis describing what Muir coyly calls "it," and this is certainly one of the best sentences that Amis has ever written. (It is on page 1049, since you are wondering.) "A line of comic genius," Muir announces, once more telling us, maddeningly, when to laugh, and how loud; but I concur. I cannot think, though, why we should have an extended passage from Martin Amis's first novel on roughly the same topic; crude and witless, in my judgment, but in any case so heartless and mean-spirited that it is hard to see how it can qualify as humorous. Its inclusion is a bad error of taste from every point of view. Anyway, don't give this book to your rich aunt for Christmas—not, that is, unless she is a very broad-minded aunt indeed.

Admirers of Anita Loos (who gets only two pages in this book) will recall that when Lorelei Lee got to London she found that the English all turn out to be trying to sell you something. One thing that the English are trying to sell you is books; a publisher that has recently given the world *The Oxford Book of Canadian Military Anecdotes* does not have a very highly developed sense of shame, and the reason these anthologies keep pouring from the press is that they pull in the green stuff. It is vital, therefore, to please

Now in a Second Edition

The perfect tool for understanding Europe's recent dramatic events

EASTERN EUROPE, GORBACHEV, AND REFORM

The Great Challenge

Karen Dawisha

"Cogently written with a superb command of the sources."
— *Library Journal*

"Karen Dawisha presents a lucid, well-structured picture of the causes leading to the reforms and of the difficulties encountered by the policymakers in making them operational."
— *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*

In this revised edition, Karen Dawisha shows how the first five years of the Gorbachev era have affected the reform process in Eastern Europe.

38498-2 Hardcover $37.50
38652-7 Paper $12.95

At bookstores or from
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

Call toll-free 800-872-7423 outside NY State. 800-227-0247, NY State only. MasterCard / VISA accepted. Prices subject to change.

Saudi Arabia

THE CEASELESS QUEST FOR SECURITY

By NADAV SAFRAN. Combining vast scholarship and a deep understanding of Arab culture, Safran provides a highly sophisticated perspective on shifting inter-Arab alignments and rivalries; war, revolution, and other cataclysmic events in the Persian Gulf; and the involvement of the United States in the Middle East.

"The most comprehensive, informative and reliable account of Saudi foreign policy yet written."
—John C. Campbell
New York Times Book Review
$15.95 paper

Cornell University Press
124 Roberts Place/Ithaca, NY 14850

cornell

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as many customers as possible, and Muir has been under instruction (one imagines) to include pieces not just from the United States but from as much of the English-speaking world as he can manage.

Stephen Leacock solves the Canada problem; Australia and New Zealand get diversely treated. Open any history of Australian literature and you will be told that Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson are the great figures of its early period (the former even appears on one of the Australian banknotes, sporting a vast mustache that relegates Muir's to the second division). Lawson and Paterson duly appear, the latter with an anecdote as short as it is uninteresting, the former with a story that Muir calls "warmhearted." It is about how a dog is blown up with dynamite, and several others mutilated. Well, Muir is a busy man, and perhaps his mind was elsewhere. A far superior example of Aussie humor would have been Norman Lindsay's *The Magic Pudding*, which I am tempted to describe as the best children's book not written in England. Muir generally gives children's books shortish shrift: Carroll and Grahame are in, but not Milne or Beatrix Potter. I particularly regret Potter's absence, since she was a master not only of humor, but also of prose—the finest stylist among children's writers, with every word perfectly judged.

Modern Australia is almost entirely neglected; there is not even a place for Alistair Morrison's glorious mock-professorial investigations of Strine, the Australian language, which would have compared interestingly with Jennings's flights of linguistic fancy. It may be mere ignorance that leads one to suppose that *Masterpieces of New Zealand Humor* belongs on the shelf of slimmer volumes, beside *The Wit and Wisdom of Manuel Noriega* and *The J. Paul Getty Happiness Book*; but Muir does little to disabuse one. Oddly, he prints a couple of satires on the various styles of modern New Zealand fiction. Experts on modern New Zealand fiction may find these hilarious.

I hesitate to pass judgment on Muir's fairly extensive American selection. For the most part it seems rather dispiriting. One may suspect that the Algonquin lot were a mutual admiration society who talked up one another's merits, but I would never have guessed that Dorothy Parker (the brightest of them? certainly a master of the one-liner) could have produced anything as lame and labored as the two specimens printed here. It must be possible to gather a better collection of American humor than this.

And here I come back to the great giveaway in Muir's preface. The English, he reveals, invented humor. The unlucky nations of the Continent have never acquired a sense of humor, or even been able to understand what it is. The United States and the dominions have humor only because they were lucky enough to be colonized by the British. So now you know. One might have thought that the origins even of some of the American pieces that Muir prints were Jewish or Middle European rather than English. But anyway, the cat is out of the bag: this is at heart an anthology of British humor in the past century and a half, with a few bumps and excrescences added on, and it would be kindest to judge it as a search for the Englishness of English comedy.

Muir's ideal is clearly Wodehouse, who gets far more space than anyone else, and is placed, out of sequence, at the very end of the book. For how many people, I wonder, does Wodehouse have a local flavor? Some years ago, when I was teaching at a school in Pakistan, a boy rushed up to me in great excitement. "Sir, sir, the book you are carrying, is it by P. G. Wodehouse?" I was amazed that he had heard of Wodehouse, and baffled by the question (the book was a paperback, in the uniform orange binding that all Penguin novels had at that time, and Wodehouse was the only writer he had ever met in such a guise). I asked him if he liked Wodehouse. "Oh, yes sir. Best writer in the world. Except Shakespeare and Iqbal," he added guiltily.

My first reaction was astonishment that the boy could make anything of stories about earls and country houses and gentlemen's clubs. My second reaction was to cancel my surprise: like the world of Homer's heroes, I thought, the world of Wodehouse is an artificial construction, unlike any society that has actually existed, and is as accessible to a Pakistani schoolboy as to you or me. But that too, I now think, is a half truth. Wodehouse's world is a fantasy and (again like Homer) an amalgam of periods, putting the idle rich of the 1890s into the setting of the 1920s—George Orwell remarked that Bertie Wooster, if he existed at all, was killed on the western front—but it does have an important, if tangential, relation to reality.

It is significant that Wodehouse's work, for all its consummate professionalism, should be unequal in quality. His later books settled for a slick efficiency, with consistency sacrificed for the quick laugh. In *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit*, for example, the novelist Lady Florence Crye is depicted sometimes as an intellectual, sometimes as a purveyor of romantic slush; the younger Wodehouse would not have been so careless. His early work may be technically less assured,

Increase your hearing range by a factor of at least 10×, with . . .

BionicEar IV
only $29.95*

But read this ad for an even better deal!

•Bionic Ear IV is the state of the art in sound amplification. Besides its many other applications, it is a boon to the hard of hearing, a marvelous help in the theatre or for low-volume TV listening. It comes with a full complement of attachments. The 9V battery is not included.

The instructions to the *BionicEar IV* caution you to have the control on "very low" when you first try the instrument. If you do not, it could scare the daylights out of you. The thing is truly astonishing and in a way almost unbelievable, until you try it and convince yourself. Put *BionicEar IV* in your shirt pocket and realize to your amazement that you can hear whispered conversations up to 50 feet away, a pin drop 10 feet away, and even hear what people are talking about in the next room. A walk through the woods will reveal birds, deer, squirrels and even little crawly things that you never would have known about otherwise. It really increases your range of hearing by at least 10×!

Rodelvox BionicEar IV comes with a full complement of attachments: Belt/Pocket Clip, Bud-Style Earphones, and 20' Headphone Cord (for TV). Batteries are not included.

We are the exclusive importers of Rodelvox electronic instruments and can therefore bring you this startling product for just $29.95. National catalog houses sell almost identical devices for $59.95 or more. But, we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $59.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Enhance your range of perception, hear things you never heard before, and find out things you couldn't know otherwise. Get your *Rodelvox BionicEar IV* today!

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 882-3050
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order **Code #4211A453**. If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone # for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. Add shipping/insurance: $4.95 for one; $5.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

For quantity orders (100+), call Ernest Gerard, our Wholesale/Premium Manager at (415) 543-6570 or write him at the address below.

since 1967
haverhills®
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but it includes amid the farce affectionately mocking pictures of the genteel petit bourgeois life of the south London that he had known in boyhood, before he escaped entirely into his never-never land of peers, butlers, and imperious aunts.

Muir prints, besides a lot of short extracts, three substantial pieces of Wodehouse. The first, *Ukridge's Accident Syndicate*, is an uncharacteristically brutal piece that I would not have chosen. (Don't get me wrong, I'm all in favor of nastiness, I just don't think that it was Wodehouse's style.) The other two pieces are masterly: the scene in *Right Ho, Jeeves* where Gussie Fink-Nottle presents the prizes at Market Snodsbury Grammar School, and a short story, "Lord Emsworth and the Girl Friend." The second of these is the one wholly successful piece of sentiment in his oeuvre (there are in fact quite a few, usually poor, attempts at some gentle tear-jerking in the earlier books). The idea sounds mawkish, Lord Fauntleroy with knobs on: Cockney slum child on holiday in the country charms elderly peer. In fact it delights because it is so uproariously funny; it is touching because it does not set out to be touching—that is an incidental bonus. And unlike the creepy fantasy of Fauntleroy, which manages to be snobbish and inverted-snobbish at the same time, it does connect, in some curious way, with the actuality of English life.

The same can be said of Gussie and the prizes. Here the donnée sounds even cruder: shy man has to give speech, tries some dutch courage, gets hopelessly drunk. But every reader will agree that the result is a riot of comic invention. And again, though it is farce, the farce would lose half its tang if there were not an authentic feeling for the flavor of provincial life: the school hall "heavy and languorous . . . with the scent of Young England and boiled beef and carrots" (there is a queer poetry in that), the collision of social classes, the picture of schoolboys confronted by an adult who has ceased to behave as a grown-up.

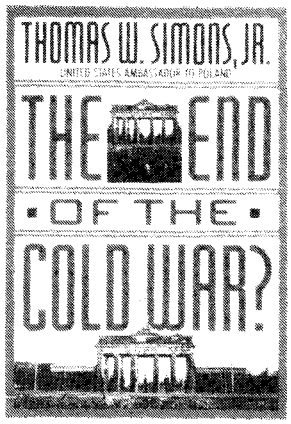
It is a sign of Wodehouse's Englishness that he was never quite at his ease when he set his stories in America, as he quite often did. Wodehouse loved America, and spent much of his middle life there. Indeed, he has a place in the history of the American musical; it may have been he, as much as anyone, who invented the kind of comic-touching lyric that was later acidulated and brought to its perfection by Lorenz Hart. He might well have settled in Long Island even if he had not been driven into exile by the shameful row over his alleged treachery in the Second World War. But he remained a stranger in his adopted country. His American characters are seen romantically, from outside; they are dynamic multimillionaires, gangsters, or Hollywood moguls with impossibly dominating personalities. He could never have transferred his affectionate remembrance of the dullness and muddle of English life to an American setting.

The reason that some of Muir's selections disappoint, I think, is that they are not about anything, just congeries of jokes or smart attitudes. Humor at its best needs some contact with reality. To return to Anita Loos: the passage of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* that Muir chooses (from the first chapter) is funny enough, but the finest parts of the book surely come later when the weltanschauung of Little Rock confronts Europe: London, Paris, and Vienna ("So then Dr. Froyd said that all I needed was to cultivate a few inhibitions and get some sleep").

The most universal comedy is often rooted in a sense of place. Muir prints a lot of Mark Twain, but nothing from *Huckleberry Finn*, so we do not see him as the poet of the Mississippi. Two of the most popular humorists of the moment, Garrison Keillor and Armistead Maupin, both trade on this sense of place (Keillor gets into Muir, Maupin does not). I shall risk the contempt of right-thinking people by confessing that I read the first fifty pages of *Lake Wobegon Days* with the liveliest enthusiasm, but by the end I was weary. For all his talent, Keillor has two big weaknesses. The first is that he cannot create character. The second is harder to put into words; but is not Lake Wobegon, in the last resort, a mean and depressing place?

I do not mean that Keillor should have given us a sentimentally wry picture of small-town life, filled with wonderfully gnarled and crusty old characters. But we can see what is missing by comparison with a great comic masterpiece, *The Diary of a Nobody* by George and Weedon Grossmith (well represented in Muir). Here the suburban North London of the 1890s seems to be preserved as if in aspic. Mr. Pooter's prose remains miraculously flat throughout; we are in no doubt that his life is narrow and he himself dull, unimaginative, and fussily pompous about his supposed dignity. And yet the book is not only marvelously funny, it is in some strange way life-enhancing; the Grossmiths' picture of the Pooters' dull world is entirely unsentimental and undeceived, yet irradiated by a quality of—affection is not quite the right word, perhaps we should say humanity.

From the new U.S. Ambassador to Poland...



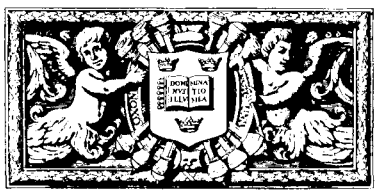
ISBN 0-312-04536-0 *$16.95*

"This book is a document that any serious historian of these years will welcome." —**George P. Shultz**

"A searching examination of a very timely and complex issue..." —**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS
Available at bookstores.

Residential Summer Study Program in
OXFORD UNIVERSITY
for High School Students
Faculty includes:
Oxford Dons • Five Rhodes Scholars



Economics • Speech • Writing • Drama
Film Studies • Science • Politics • Law
THE OXFORD TRADITION
Box 250328 • Columbia Univ. Station
New York, NY 10025
(212) 932-3049 • (800) 828-8349

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY
by E. Waterhouse Allen
Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.
BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The chief pleasures of Muir's anthology for American readers, I suspect, will lie in the revisiting of some old friends and the introduction to some British writers whom they may not have known before. Let me end with two favorites: Heathco, Barry Fantoni, and Richard Ingrams's send-up of the ineptly managerial style of Edward Heath's government; and *The Life and Death of H. Rochester Sneath*, Humphry Berkeley's record of the wittiest hoax ever devised. While an undergraduate at Cambridge, Berkeley posed as the headmaster of a fourth-rate private school, and wrote to other headmasters and public figures soliciting and dispensing good advice. His beautifully ingenious letters, and the replies they elicited (only three of the recipients saw through the deception), will tell you more about English life than half a dozen books of sociology. Berkeley himself is a remarkable figure, one of the last of the maverick aristocrats; once a Conservative M.P., he has since been through at least two other parties. Wodehouse might have invented him.

RICHARD JENKYNS is the author of *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Harvard University Press).

HOME STUDY COURSE

in economics. A 10-lesson study that will throw light on today's baffling problems. Tuition free—small charge for materials.

Write Henry George Institute, 121 E. 30th Street, New York, NY 10016,

CLASSIC T-SHIRTS!

Beethoven, Confucius, Da Vinci, Jung, J.F.K., Mozart, Shakespeare, Cheshire Cat, Twain, Darwin, Van Gogh, Gandhi, Nietzsche, Poe, Thoreau, Austen, Sherlock Holmes, others.

T-Shirt: (white or lt. blue) $12.75, 4/$46.
Sweatshirt: (white or grey) $23, 2/$44.
Sizes: S, M, L, XL. **Ship:** $2.25 per order.
Illustrated brochure: 75¢
Historical Products, Box 220 C L **Cambridge, MA 02238**

You said you liked FineLine. You just didn't like our price.

So, we've lowered the yearly subscription price of FineLine, the Newsletter on Journalism Ethics to

$49

It's a price you can afford – for a publication you can't afford to be without. Send your check to:

FineLine
Suite B
600 East Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202
Or Call 1-800-736-0897

Call for any book

- **Immediate shipment worldwide.**
- **Credit cards or check.**
- **Ask about our overnight gift delivery nationwide.**
- **Free monthly New Title Forecast.**
- **Mail orders welcome.**
- **Open 24 hours every day.**

BOOK CALL

1-800-255-2665
In CT or Worldwide 203-966-5470
FAX 1-203-966-4329
59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

sanctions by suggesting that I "won't advocate lifting the sanctions until the ANC sounds the all clear." It is my position that sanctions should be lifted only when the United States judges the process of change toward a non-racial democracy to be irreversible. We must be certain that by lifting sanctions we are not undermining the pro-democracy forces in negotiations with the government. This has been our approach toward Eastern European countries as well as Nicaragua.

Finally, Weisberg questions my objectivity with regard to the African National Congress, by suggesting that I don't care if it is committed to a free press or if it accepts the legitimacy of other political parties. The ANC surely includes individuals whose views differ from my own. However, the leadership of the ANC has unequivocally declared its support for a free press and has recognized the legitimacy of other political parties. In a democratic non-racial South Africa, I am sure that the majority of South Africans will hold the ANC and all other political parties accountable for guaranteeing these rights and values, among many others.

HOWARD WOLPE
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Jacob Weisberg replies:

Representative Wolpe now argues that "the tide has turned" against apartheid *and* that "nothing fundamental has changed" in South Africa. I would be curious to know how he reconciles these positions. When I interviewed him, he stuck to the latter line, which fails to recognize that dramatic changes have taken place. These include the repeal of the pass laws and the Separate Amenities Act, the legalization of black unions, the passage of property rights for blacks, the repeal of the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts, the release of hundreds of political prisoners including Mandela, the unbanning of the ANC, and the start of negotiations. Apartheid still exists, of course. I said Wolpe failed to recognize that it was crumbling. He still does. On the other points: Wolpe's letter makes clear that he does not plan to support lifting sanctions when the conditions written into law are met. Like the ANC, he does not specify what new conditions he intends to impose. Asked about ANC leaders who have spoken against a free press and do not accept the legitimacy of rival political parties, Wolpe professed doubt that any such existed. This was the basis for my claim that he, like Randall Robinson, is willfully blind to the ANC's faults.

Pro-choice

To the editors:

In "Theory of Choice" (July 23), Robert F. Nagel and Jack H. Nagel make two puzzling references to my brother Frank, a federal appeals court judge. Noting that he has drawn a distinction between "general-interest" and "private-interest" legislation—the former to have higher standing among judges when legislative intent is contested—they write, "Easterbrook's example of a private-interest statute is the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, the law that sets comprehensive standards for the safe manufacture and use of radioactive materials. A theory that condones unenthusiastic enforcement of this statute is rather ominous."

This stands Frank's views exactly on their head. Writing in *Harvard Law Review* on the Supreme Court decision in *Silkwood* v. *Kerr-McGee*, he did indeed express lack of enthusiasm for the Atomic Energy Act—because it granted Kerr-McGee an inadequately regulated monopoly at the expense of public safety. "The private-interest reading of the statute leads to a ruling against the nuclear power business," Frank wrote, endowing the $10 million award to Karen Silkwood's estate as one means to compel nuclear processors to a higher standard of accountability than the 1954 act imposed. This hardly strikes me as "ominous."

GREGG EASTERBROOK
Washington, D.C.

Robert F. Nagel and Jack H. Nagel respond:

Gregg Easterbrook is right that, as applied in the *Silkwood* case, his brother's theory would allow state tort awards to supplement the safety requirements of the Atomic Energy Act. This is because that act is said to be a "private interest law" and so, to use his brother's words, while the "awards of juries may be good or they may be bad," the "deal" represented by the federal legislation "did not cover them." Obviously, "unenthusiastic" enforcement of the Atomic Energy Act could also lead to judicial decisions aimed at reducing regulatory costs and encouraging free competition in the nuclear industry when no specific deal forbids such results. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT LIGHTS UP IN THE DARK!

Barnes and Noble Proudly Presents MERCURY—A World Class Illuminated Globe.

A globe is like an encyclopedia or Bible— no educated home is complete without one. Maps are all very well and good, but only the *three-dimensionality* of a globe can accurately represent the shape and proportions of our planet— it's a "hands-on" geographical learning aid the whole family can use.

Includes 25-watt bulb, 6 ft. cord. All parts UL listed.

And now your family can enjoy discovering a *new* world with the Mercury *Illuminated* Globe— an impeccably detailed, 18" tall model of our planet made in Italy by Nova Rico, the premier globe-makers of Europe.

Two Globes in One

Exquisitely designed and perfectly executed, the *Mercury* is actually two globes in one! Before you switch it on, it offers a comprehensive view of the earth's physical surface, including its topography, elevations, vegetation patterns, ocean currents plus latitude, longitude and international date lines as well as 3,600 place names— everything from the tallest peaks to the tiniest islands!

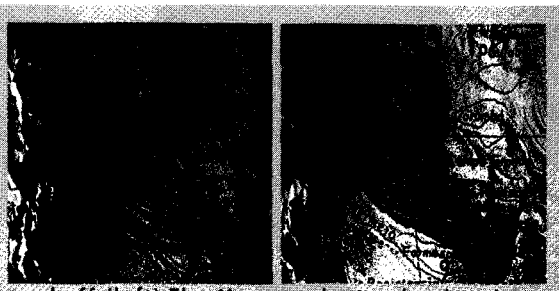
As if all that weren't enough, switch the *Mercury* on, and its illuminated surface takes on an entirely new dimension. Here you will see the political world— the most current national boundaries and international borders— revealed *in 8 brilliant colors!* Clearly, no conventional globe can match the unique, exciting appeal of the *Mercury.*

PRICE BREAKTHROUGH!
Suggested List $48.95

NOW ONLY $29.95

An Earthshaking Bargain

Now it's easier than ever to let the *Mercury* light up your home. Only Barnes & Noble is able to offer this outstanding globe— normally sold for $48.95— for the astonishingly low price of ONLY $29.95! Never before— and probably never again— will a globe of such high quality be offered at such a low price.



Turned off (left) The Mercury depicts land and ocean topography—switched on (right) the political world, including current boundaries and international borders, is revealed in eight vivid colors.

Don't Miss Out on This Great Offer

Have you put off buying a globe for your family or yourself? Or have you noticed that the globe you have now doesn't reflect the vast changes of recent history? If so, this is your opportunity to own a globe that is not only beautiful, but completely accurate and up-to-date as well. So don't delay— order yours today!

UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE
You must be completely satisfied with every item you order from Barnes & Noble by mail, or you may return it to us, for a full refund.

ORDER TOLL-FREE
1-800-242-6657
CALL ANYTIME, DAY OR NIGHT

Barnes & Noble
Booksellers Since 1873

DEPT. G518
126 FIFTH AVE.
NY, NY 10011

1430917. Please send me _____ Mercury Illuminated Globe(s) at your special sale price of only $29.95 (plus $3.00 each shipping and insurance). **Add sales tax for deliveries to CT, MA, MN, NJ, NY, PA, & CA(6%).**

NAME

ADDRESS APT #

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Diners Club

CREDIT CARD NUMBER EXP DATE

MO YR

SIGNATURE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Understatements

THERE ARE QUITE A FEW YOUNG revolutionaries around Washington these days. To a child of the '60s like myself, they look countercultural enough, but of course there's a twist. They are not American but Eastern European. Talking with one scruffy Czech dissident at a party, I was overcome by the spirit of ex-student solidarity and mentioned that I'd marched in protests against the Vietnam War. "I think you should have won that war," he said in halting English. I wasn't quite ready for this, and mumbled something about how, well, it was complicated, you had to have been here. "Yes, but Communists are bad. And they are very hard to get rid of." I excused myself to get a stiff drink.

WHAT I WISH I'D TOLD MY CZECH friend is this: communism's collapse makes America's involvement in the Vietnam War look more foolish, not less. That's because communism will eventually collapse in Vietnam too. Vietnam's government recently issued a statement (or understatement) conceding that events in Eastern Europe have had "a negative impact on the hearts and minds of the people, cadres, and combatants. . . ." According to *The Washington Post*'s George Wilson, Vietnamese officials now openly worry whether their soldiers would be willing to crush a pro-democracy movement. (President Bush has warmed up to Vietnam's leaders just in time to kowtow to them, too, when they stage their own Tiananmen.)

SURELY VIETNAM'S COMMUNISTS would be losing "hearts and minds" today even if they had come to power in 1965 rather than 1975. The painfully obvious question is: Was it worth losing a million American and Asian lives—plus however many more it would have taken to actually win the war—to achieve what everybody agrees is going to happen any year now anyway? I don't mean to argue that a generation of dictatorship isn't worth fighting against. But it is not the same as permanent dictatorship. The revealed transience of communism shifts the moral calculus of Vietnam further against the war. Vietnam may even (in the very long run) be better off for the Communists' victory. In power they discredited themselves in a way that would never have been possible if they'd remained a Philippine-like guerrilla opposition to an "authoritarian" regime in the South.

DAVID BRODER OF *THE WASHINGton Post* is a stickler for journalistic ethics. A couple of years ago he gave a widely celebrated speech denouncing people who move back and forth between journalism and politics. Who can trust such a "hybrid creature" not to shade the truth in pursuit of partisan or personal causes? But when it comes to his own writing, Broder's discovered a clever escape hatch from this dilemma. Recently he wrote a column about Dianne Feinstein's campaign for governor of California. "As a reporter I have to keep my distance from that race, because my oldest son worked for Feinstein in her last couple of years as mayor," Broder disclosed. "But," he continued breezily, "there's no bias involved in telling you that influential Republicans regard her combination of femininity, governmental experience, and freshness to statewide politics as a potent mixture in an electorate apparently eager to shake things up in Sacramento." Broder's innovation surely deserves more widespread use. For example: "Mr. Mayor, it would be highly unethical for me to recommend my son-in-law for this sewer contract. But there's no bias in telling you that influential members of the construction industry regard his combination of efficiency, underground experience, and financial probity a potent benefit to our infrastructure." The truth, of course, is that once Broder has revealed his conflict of interest, there is no reason he (or any "hybrid") shouldn't be free to write what they want, letting the reader decide whether to discount their judgments.

LIKE MANY AMERICANS, I SUSPECT, I reacted on a personal level to the Iraq crisis—I invested my 1990 IRA in the stock market while the Dow was down. A friend of mine called her parents, who live in an oil-producing state. Wasn't this Mideast business scary? Sure, the answer came, but crude's at $24 a barrel. At the same time, neither I nor my friends seem to know anyone whose son or daughter might die in a battle on the Saudi desert. Americans' exposure to war's risk is now even more class-skewed than it was during Vietnam. The Vietnam draft was notoriously unfair, but it at least *threatened* families like mine with the costs of military action. With the current all-volunteer army, only families below the middle worry about the kid down the street dying. The above-middle classes root from the sidelines and play the market. Most people—most people who vote, anyway—aren't really threatened at all. The political disincentive to war is diminished. Maybe it's a good thing television will compensate by overemphasizing any casualties.

BY NOW WE'VE ALL HEARD OF THE thirteen-story, 484,000-square-foot palace that Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was building, at obscene expense, before his demise. Reporters, understandably, have heaped abuse on this building, calling it (to pick the *Post*'s epithet) a "Stalinist monstrosity." Am I alone in thinking the palace is, well, kind of good-looking? I haven't been there, much less visited all 1,000 rooms; I'm only judging from photos. And perhaps the accompanying Victory of Socialism Boulevard lacks a certain sense of human scale (combining, says Vladimir Tismaneanu, the best of Brasília and Pyongyang). But the palace itself, with its eclectic blend of styles—neoclassical, baroque, Late Trump, you name it—is the veritable acme of Postmodernism. The classical detail isn't just pasted on, à la Michael Graves, as some sort of semi-ironic reference. Terrorized artisans actually carved it into the stone. Yes, the palace stands for something anti-human. The neighborhood it replaced was apparently both beautiful and historic (as well as home to 50,000 people). The thing should not have been built. But in forty years preservationists will be marching to protect it.

SUPPOSE GEORGE BUSH STARTLED the nation by going on television and saying something like this: "We all have to sacrifice a bit to solve this deficit problem. Rich as well as poor. So, as part of a long-term package that includes some excise taxes and spending cuts, I'm agreeing to apply the top federal income tax rate to the highest incomes, and to raise that 33 percent rate to 35 percent. That's two percentage points. Not the end of the world. Prosperous Americans can take the hit." Don't you think that this statement would (foreign crises and recessions permitting) almost ensure Bush's re-election? Democratic strategists with whom I've talked don't doubt it. "The Democrats would have nothing left except Social Security," said one. So why doesn't Bush do it? There are two possibilities. Possibility A: He really believes that even a small hike in top tax rates would hurt the economy. That doesn't seem likely to me. What Bush appears to believe in is a tax break for capital gains, not low taxes on ordinary income. Possibility B: He is worried about alienating his conservative "base." But if he is, it's extraordinarily timid of him. Suppose conservatives really get mad and run someone (say, Pat Buchanan) against Bush in the 1992 GOP primaries. Does Bush really think he'd lose? Wouldn't fending off the right only make him more appealing to moderate swing voters? In some ways, despite all those troops in Saudi Arabia, the man's still a wimp.

MICKEY KAUS

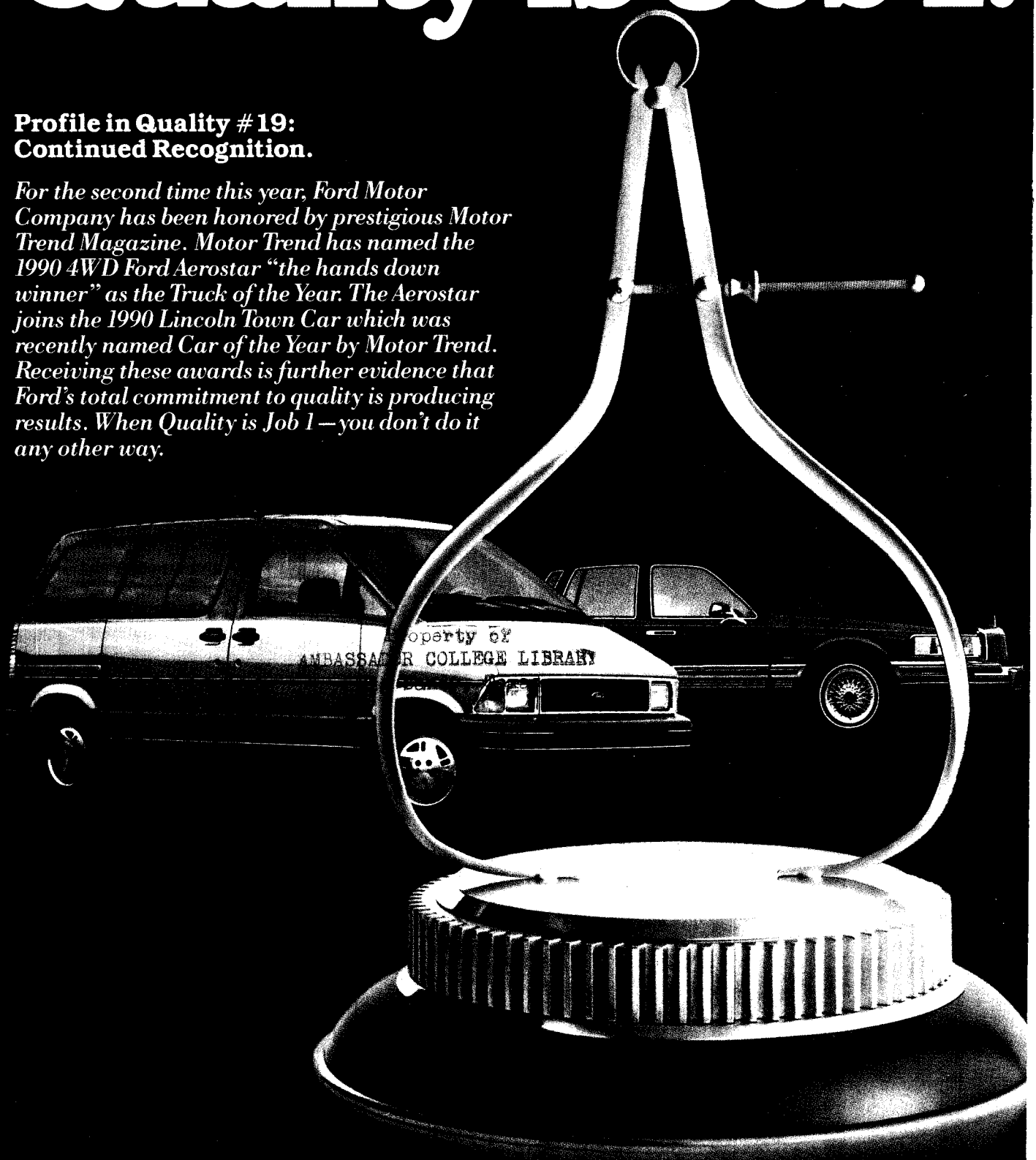
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Quality is Job 1.SM

Profile in Quality #19:
Continued Recognition.

For the second time this year, Ford Motor Company has been honored by prestigious Motor Trend Magazine. Motor Trend has named the 1990 4WD Ford Aerostar "the hands down winner" as the Truck of the Year. The Aerostar joins the 1990 Lincoln Town Car which was recently named Car of the Year by Motor Trend. Receiving these awards is further evidence that Ford's total commitment to quality is producing results. When Quality is Job 1—you don't do it any other way.



Ford, Mercury, Lincoln, Ford Trucks.
Our goal is to build the highest quality cars and trucks in the world.SM

Ford

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Buckle up—Together we can save lives.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED